THE ACTS

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The Acts with commentaries

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THE ACTS

WITH

COMMENTARIES

BY

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PREFACE.

In the preparation of the present book the usual commentaries have been consulted. For a number of valuable suggestions the author is specially indebted to "Studies in the Acts" by Samuel Miller. It may seem unusual that two works on the same Book should appear from the same institution, but a glance at both will show that they do not cover the same ground at all in the same manner. They intersect only as two joined links. The one is a "Study," and the other a plain commentary. We trust none the less that the latter will prove to be in some degree supplementary to the former. The present work, however, is not a commentary in the usual sense of the term. It comments indeed on the contents of the Acts, but only in the form of the briefest notes of explanation for the average reader of the Bible. Our one object has been to make the text itself plain and, in so far, interesting and instructive. That is, it is mainly a handy reference book, and not "devotional literature." To merely read it, without looking up the Scripture references and without consulting at every step the text of Acts itself, is certain to prove disappointing. But on the condition that it be made a companion volume to the Acts, and each reference be permitted to shed its light on the passage under consideration, the publication of these notes

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implies a confident hope that they will prove to be of value.

We have confined ourselves mainly to the historical phase of Acts and made the notes explanatory of the related facts. We do not wish to minimize the importance of the question—and its answer—, "What does this mean for *me?*" But, as Dean Miller says, "If you know *what* is in the Bible, the Holy Spirit will help you to interpret and apply." Nor have we entered upon any discussion of the problems. We have simply weighed the evidence and then adopted the view which seemed to have that evidence in its favor.

Trusting that the reader of the following pages may find the formation he seeks within the narrow limits of their scope, and, above all, that he may derive the spiritual benefit which the study of the Word yields to the praying heart, we submit our little Commentary for such consideration as it may merit, praying that in spite of its numerous and possibly serious shortcomings God will bless its use, to the glory of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. With this prayer we commend each reader "to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified" (Acts 20. 32).

INTRODUCTION.

In the picturesque Bantu language of Africa the title for the Acts of the Apostles is "Words about Deeds." But whose deeds? Not of all the apostles, for only the acts of three of the original Twelve are mentioned. Eleven of the original Twelve are mentioned by name in the first chapter, with the addition of Matthias, but of these only Peter, James, and John figure in the body of the book. James is mentioned only in connection with his martyrdom in chapter 12, and John is mentioned only three times as the companion of Peter in chapters 3, 4, and 6. The real title of the book, moreover, in the original Greek, is not "The Acts of the Apostles," but simply "Acts of Apostles." That is, not all the acts of some of the apostles, nor some of the acts of all the apostles, but some of the acts of some of the apostles.

It is chiefly the acts of Peter that are recounted in the first part of the book, chapters 1–12. And the rest of the book contains chiefly the acts of Paul. We might therefore say that the book is really the acts of the apostles Peter and Paul.

A closer study of the book, however, tells us that it is the acts of the risen *Lord* that form its real contents. In the Gospel according to Luke the same author tells us what Jesus *"began* both to do and to teach until the day

in which he was taken up." In Acts we have a summary of what He *continued* to do and to teach *after* He was taken up. And yet here again it is only a few specimens of the many wonderful events of those early days. Acts too is only a book of beginnings. Indeed even the usual conclusion is wanting, cut off perhaps by the imprisonment and death of the writer. The close is certainly abrupt, and Acts has therefore been called "the only unfinished book in the Bible." But Griffith Thomas asks, "How can there be a complete account of a person's life and work so long as he lives?" We agree therefore with the same writer that "the book might with great accuracy be called 'The Acts of the Exalted Lord.'" It tells us what He "began to do and to teach" following His Resurrection from the dead. It reveals to us the victorious and glorified Saviour still at work in His Church by the Holy Spirit through His chosen instruments.

The Lord Jesus is shown to be—

1. The divine Instructor of His people. 1. 2–9.
2. The great Hope of the Church. 1. 10, 11.
3. Its Guide in times of difficulty. 1. 24; 7. 55, 56; 10. 13–16; 16. 10; 18. 9, 10; 22. 18–21; 23. 11.
4. The Object of prayer. 1. 24; 7. 59; 9. 14.
5. The Sender of the Holy Spirit. 2. 33.
6. The Burden of all sermons and addresses. 2. 22–36; 3. 13–15; 4. 10–33; 5. 30; 6. 14; 8. 5, 35; 10. 36, etc.
7. The One who wins souls. 2. 47; 9. 3–6.
8. The only Hope for a perishing world. 4. 12.

But in this incomplete book there is system and order. 1. 8 is the key to the analysis: "But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The book opens with the preaching of the gospel in Jerusalem, the religious center of the Jewish nation; it shifts the center from Jerusalem to Antioch in Syria; and it closes with the preaching in Rome, the great capital of the Gentile world. At each of the widening circles of influence there is a marked outpouring of the Holy Spirit (2. 1–4; 8. 17; 10. 44).

The first seven chapters give an account of the *founding* of the Church; chapters 8–12, the Church *scattered* by persecution; chapters 13–20, the Church *extended;* and chapters 21–28, the Church *center transferred* from Jerusalem and Antioch to Rome. In chapters 1–7 the Church is purely *Jewish;* in 8–12, *mixed;* in 13–20, *Gentile;* in 21–28, *universal.*

The author of the book is Luke, the traveling companion of Paul. Acts is the second book of a historical work, of which the Gospel according to Luke forms the first volume. "Acts takes up the subject from the death and resurrection of the Saviour, and describes the great steps and critical stages by which Christianity spread over the world and was formed into an organized universal Church" (RAMSAY). The writer was evidently a man of good education. His culture is of the Greek type. Many little touches show the interest of "the beloved physician" (Col. 4. 14). His birthplace was most prob-

ably Pisidian Antioch. He may have been one of Paul's converts in that city. Certainly the account given in 13. 15–52 is that of an eye-witness. Shortly afterwards we find him with Paul at Troas (16. 10). "The probability is that he belonged to that interesting class, the 'God-fearers,' those pious Gentiles who, dissatisfied with their heathen religion and attracted by the pure ideals of the Jewish faith, attached themselves to the synagogue and shared its worship without submitting to the ceremonial rites of the Mosaic Law. He was summoned to the invalid's couch; and as he ministered to his bodily infirmity, he heard from his lips the blessed secret which his heart had been craving. Thenceforward he was the Apostle's dearest disciple, and the Church owes him not only the gracious Gospel which bears his name and breathes his master's spirit, but the Book of Acts, that precious record of the heroic ministry in which he bore so large a part" (DAVID SMITH).

The pronoun "we," occurring in chapters 16, 20, 21, 27, 28, marks the author as personally engaged in the incidents there described.

Modern archeology has proved his narrative to be marvelously accurate.

The date of Acts has been fixed as 64 A.D. The book covers a period of thirty-five years, from 29 to 64 A.D.

On the value of the book Dummelow says: "It is the only authentic record which we possess of the first thirty-five years of the history of the Christian Church. With the exception of a few meager hints in St. Paul's Epistles, Acts is absolutely our only first-century authority for the

momentous events which followed the Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord. Even from the purely secular point of view, the process by which an obscure Jewish sect expanded into a world-wide Church, is a subject full of interest; but for Christians, who believe that the process was part of God's gracious purpose for the salvation and regeneration of the world, the subject possesses an interest and attractiveness altogether unique." "If Acts had not come down to us, there would have been a blank in our knowledge which scarcely anything else could have filled up" (FARRAR). "If the Book of Acts were gone, there would be nothing to replace it; and we may go further, that the Christian Scriptures would then lie before us in two disjointed fragments; the complete arch would not be built" (HOWSON).

A simple way of knowing the contents of the book is to give names to the twenty-eight chapters, memorize the list, and in this manner "think through" the book. We submit the following suggestions, which the reader of course may improve upon at pleasure.

1. Ascension.
2. Pentecost.
3. Beautiful Gate.
4. Arrest.
5. Ananias and Sapphira.
6. Deacons.
7. Stephens.
8. Philip.
9. Saul.
10. Cornelius.
11. "Christians."
12. Herod.
13. Antioch.
14. Lystra-Derbe.
15. Council.
16. Philippi.
17. Athens.
18. Corinth.
19. Ephesus.
20. Elders.

21. Trophimus.
22. Stairway.
23. Conspiracy.
24. Felix.
25. Festus.
26. Agrippa.
27. Shipwreck.
28. Rome.

Those who wish to master the contents of the book in detail might also give names to each *paragraph* and add these to his mental survey. For example:

Chapter 1. *Ascension.*
- a. Forty Days.
- b. Olivet.
- c. Upper chamber.
- d. Matthias.

Chapter 2. *Pentecost.*
- a. Holy Spirit.
- b. Tongues.
- c. Sermon.
- d. 3000.
- e. Together.

(See The Acts, Studies by Samuel M. Miller.)

The following is a brief summary of the contents, grouped according to the key-verse, 1. 8:

A. *In Jerusalem.*

1. The Forty days. 1. 1–8.
2. The Ascension of our Lord. 1. 9–11.
3. Waiting for "the promise of the Father." 1. 12–14.
4. Appointment of Matthias. 1. 15–26.
5. Pentecost and Founding of the Church. 2.
6. Lame man healed. 3.
7. First persecution. 4.
8. Ananias and Sapphira. 5.
9. The Seven. 6.
10. Stephen. 7.

B. *In Judæa and Samaria.*

1. Persecution under Saul. 8. 1–4.
2. Ministry of Philip. 8. 5–40.
3. Conversion of Saul. 9. 1–31.
4. Further ministry of Peter. 9. 32–43.
5. Conversion of Cornelius. 10. 1—11. 18.
6. The Church in Antioch. 11. 19–30.
7. Peter's arrest and deliverance. 12.

C. *Unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

1. Paul's First Missionary Journey. 13, 14.
2. First Apostolic Council. 15.
3. Second Missionary Journey. 16. 1—18. 22.
4. Third Missionary Journey. 18. 23—21. 17.
5. Paul's imprisonment. 21. 18—28. 31.

The incessant use of Bible maps is indispensable to a complete understanding and full appreciation of Acts. Every province and city should be noted and each route of travel carefully traced. This will add materially to the interest and multiply the benefits of the study.

The following Topics for private study will prove especially interesting and profitable:

1. Christ's Death and Resurrection.
2. The Holy Spirit. (There are no less than 71 references to the Holy Spirit in Acts.)
3. The Kingdom.
4. The Conversions.
5. Forgiveness.
6. "The Way."

7. The Word of God.
8. Prayer and Praise.
9. The Ten Sermons.
10. Missions.
11. Miracles.
12. Visions.
13. Angels.
14. Church Government.
15. Women.
16. Any single character, such as that of Barnabas.
17. Rulers.
18. Opponents.
19. Passages showing the professional interest of "Luke, the physician."
20. The "We" sections.

For our use in the present study of Acts we present the following detailed Analysis, which groups the material around the two chief leaders in the life of the early Church. This form of outline has the advantage of vividness of action. Biographical movement appeals to the general interest rather than a geographical setting.

(The two Main Divisions might also be called

I. The Church of Jerusalem.
II. The Church of the Empire.

or

I. The Church of the Circumcision.
II. The Church of the Uncircumcision.)

ACTS

Introduction. 1. 1—2. 13.

1. Forty Days. 1. 1–8.
2. The Ascension. 1. 9–11.
3. The Ten Days of Waiting. 1. 12–14.
4. Matthias. 1. 15–26.
5. Pentecost. 2. 1–13.
   a. The Gift of the Holy Spirit. 2. 1–4.
   b. The Immediate Effects. 2. 5–13.

A. Acts of Peter. 2. 14—12. 25.

I. *In Jerusalem.* 2. 14—8. 4.

1. Peter's Sermon. 2. 14–17.
   a. The Address. 2. 14–36.
   b. Its Effects. 2. 37–41.
   c. The Life of the Converts. 2. 42–47.
2. The Lame Man Healed. 3. 1–26.
   a. The Miracle. 3. 1–10.
   b. Peter's Discourse. 3. 11–26.
3. Arrest of Peter and John. 4. 1–37.
   a. Their Apprehension. 4. 1–4.
   b. The Trial. 4. 5–12.
   c. Their Release. 4. 13–22.
   d. Their Reception by the Brethren. 4. 23–31.
   e. The Resulting Fellowship. 4. 32–37.
4. Ananias and Sapphira. 5. 1–11.
   a. Ananias. 5. 1–6.
   b. Sapphira. 5. 7–11.
5. Signs and Wonders. 5. 12–16.

6. The Arrest of the Twelve. 5. 17–42.
   a. The Double Arrest. 5. 17–42.
   b. The Trial. 5. 27–32.
   c. Gamaliel's Advice. 5. 33–42.
7. The Seven. 6. 1–7.
8. Stephen. 6. 8–60.
   a. His Arrest. 6. 8–15.
   b. His Address. 7. 1–53.
   c. His Martyrdom. 7. 54–60.

II. *In Palestine and Syria.* 8. 1—12. 25.

1. Persecution. 8. 1–4.
2. In Samaria. 8. 5–24.
   a. Philip. 8. 5–8.
   b. Simon Magus. 8. 9–13.
   c. Peter and John. 8. 14–17.
   d. Simony. 8. 18–25.
3. The Ethiopian. 8. 26–40.
4. Saul's Conversion. 9. 1–31.
   a. The Vision. 9. 1–9.
   b. His Baptism. 9. 10–19.
   c. He Preaches Christ. 9. 20–22.
   d. His Escape from Damascus. 9. 23–25.
   e. In Jerusalem. 9. 26–31.
5. Æneas. 9. 32–35.
6. Dorcas. 9. 36–43.
7. Cornelius. 10. 1—11. 18.
   a. The Angel. 10. 1–8.
   b. Peter's Vision. 10. 9–16.
   c. The Three Messengers. 10. 17–23.

d. Peter's Reception. 10. 23–33.
e. His Sermon. 10. 34–43.
f. The Gentile Pentecost. 10. 44–48.
g. Peter's Defense. 11. 1–18.
8. The Church in Antioch. 11. 19–26.
9. Agabus. 11. 27–30.
10. Herod. 12. 1–24.
a. Peter in Prison. 12. 1–5.
b. His Deliverance. 12. 6–11.
c. He comes to the praying Christians. 12. 12–19.
d. Herod's Death. 12. 20–24.

B. Acts of Paul. 12. 25—28. 31.

I. *In Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece.* 12. 25.—21. 17.
1. First Missionary Journey. 13. 1—14. 28.
a. The Call at Antioch. 13. 1–3.
b. Cyprus. 13. 4–12.
c. Galatia. 13. 13—14. 28.
aa. Antioch of Pisidia. 13. 13–52.
(1) In the Synagogue. 13. 13–15.
(2) Paul's Sermon. 13. 16–41.
(3) Its Effect. 13. 42–52.
bb. Iconium. 14. 1–7.
cc. Lystra and Derbe. 14. 8–20.
dd. Return. 14. 21–28.
2. Apostolic Council. 15. 1–35.
a. The Controversy. 15. 1–5.

b. The Conference. 15. 6–21.
aa. The Gathering. 15. 6, 7.
bb. Peter's Address. 15. 7–11.
cc. Account of Paul and Barnabas. 15. 12.
dd. Summary of James. 15. 13–21.
ee. The Letter. 15. 22–29.
ff. Its Reception. 15. 30–35.

3. Second Missionary Journey. 15. 36—18. 22.
a. The Dissension. 15. 36–41.
b. The Churches Revisited. 16. 1–6.
c. The Macedonian Call. 16. 7–10.
d. Macedonia. 16. 11—17. 15.
aa. Philippi. 16. 11–40.
(1) Lydia. 16. 11–15.
(2) The Soothsaying Maid. 16. 16–18.
(3) The Jailor. 16. 19–34.
(4) Paul Claims Roman Citizenship. 16. 35–40.
bb. Thessalonica. 17. 1–9.
cc. Berœa. 17. 10–15.
e. Greece. 17. 16—18. 22.
aa. Athens. 17. 16–34.
(1) The Areopagus. 17. 16–21.
(2) Paul's Address. 17. 22–31.
(3) Its Effect. 17. 32–34.
bb. Corinth. 18. 1–17.
(1) Aquila and Priscilla. 18. 1–4.
(2) A Vision. 18. 5–11.
(3) Gallio. 18. 12–17.

4. Third Missionary Journey. 18. 23—21. 20.
   a. The Departure. 18. 23.
   b. Apollos. 18. 24–28.
   c. Ephesus. 19. 1–41.
      aa. The Baptism of John. 19. 1–7.
      bb. The Sons of Sceva. 19. 8–20.
      cc. Demetrius. 19. 21–41.
   d. Macedonia and Greece. 20. 1–6.
   e. Eutychus. 20. 7–12.
   f. The Coast of Asia Minor. 20. 13–16.
   g. The Elders of Ephesus. 20. 17–38.
   h. Tyre. 21. 1–6.
   i. Cæsarea. 21. 7–14.
   j. Jerusalem. 21. 15–20.

II. *In Jerusalem, Cæsarea and Rome.* 21. 20—28. 31.
   1. In Jerusalem. 21. 20—23. 22.
      a. The Advice of James. 21. 20–26.
      b. Paul's Arrest. 21. 27—23. 11.
         aa. The Occasion. 21. 27–36.
         bb. On the Stairs. 21. 37–40.
         cc. His Address. 22. 1–21.
         dd. Saved from Scourging. 22. 22–29.
         ee. His Trial before the Sanhedrin. 22. 30—23. 11.
   2. In Cæsarea. 23. 23—26. 32.
      a. Delivery of Paul to Felix. 23. 23–35.
      b. Trial before Felix. 24. 1–23.
         aa. Tertullus. 24. 1–9.

bb. Paul's Defense. 24. 10–23.

c. His Interview with Felix. 24. 24–27.

d. Before Festus. 25. 1–22.

aa. The Plot of the Jews. 25. 1–5.

bb. The Appeal to Cæsar. 25. 5–12.

cc. Festus and Agrippa. 25. 13–22.

e. Before Agrippa. 25. 13–22.

aa. Festus Introduces Paul. 25. 23–27.

bb. Paul's Address. 26. 1–29.

cc. The End of the Audience with the King. 26. 30–32.

3. To Rome. 27. 28–31.

a. The Voyage. 27. 1–8.

b. The Storm. 27. 9–26.

c. The Shipwreck. 27. 27–44.

d. Melita. 28. 1–6.

e. Publicus. 28. 7–10.

f. Arrival at Rome. 28. 11–16.

g. Paul Appeals to the Jews. 28. 17–24.

h. Paul Turns to the Gentiles. 28. 25–31.

THE ACTS

INTRODUCTION. 1. 1—2. 13.

1. The Forty Days. 1. 1–8.

1 The former treatise I made, O Theophilus, concerning all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, 2 until the day in which he was received up, after that he had given commandmen through the Holy Spirit unto the apostles whom he had chosen: 3 to whom he also showed himself alive after his passion by many proofs, appearing unto them by the space of forty days, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God: 4 and, being assembled together with them, he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said he, ye heard from me: 5 for John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

6 They therefore, when they were come together, asked him, saying, Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath set within his own authority. 8 But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

These verses cover the period of the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus. Verses 1–5 mention seven things that "Jesus began both to do and to teach," namely, His resurrection appearances, His com-

mandment to the Eleven, His speaking to them of the kingdom, His being assembled with them, His charge to them, His reference to the promise of the Father, and His ascension. To these may be added three other matters from the time before His resurrection, namely, the baptism of John, the choosing of the apostles, and the "passion."

The former treatise (v. 1). The Gospel of Luke.

Theophilus. The Acts, like the Gospel, is addressed to Theophilus. Who he was is not known. In the Gospel he is called "most excellent," which was the usual form of addressing a man of rank. Felix and Festus are addressed in the same manner (23. 26; 24. 3; 26. 25). Most probably Theophilus belonged to the equestrian order of nobility. Some Bible scholars have supposed that because the family physician was usually a slave of the household, possibly Luke may have been a former slave of Theophilus, had received his freedom when Theophilus became a Christian—perhaps through the testimony of his converted slave—, and that this Christian freed man now renders his former master the additional and far greater service of "writing him in order, tracing the course of all things accurately from the first, that he might know the certainty concerning the things wherein he had been instructed" (Lk. 1. 3, 4). The theory is of course only a pleasing conjecture, though not at all impossible. "Theophilus" is the first of no less than 110 names occurring in Acts.

Began. This refers to the work and the words of Jesus in the days of His sojourn on earth. His work as

recorded in Acts is the *continuation* of this work, carried on by the power of the Holy Spirit through His chosen servants. For the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of God. Acts is so full of references to the Holy Spirit that it has been called "The Gospel of the Holy Spirit."

Passion (v. 3). The final sufferings and the death of Jesus on the cross.

By the space. During.

Charged them (v. 4). The charge is given in Lk. 24. 46–49, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high."

The promise of the Father. The gift of the Holy Spirit. Compare Jn. 15. 26, 27, "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me: and ye also bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." Also the words of Peter in Acts 5. 32, "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

Jerusalem. They were to remain together, so that they might receive the Holy Spirit at one time and in one place.

Restore the kingdom to Israel (v. 6). It was hard even for the apostles to conceive of the kingdom as *spiritual* in nature. Before their minds were illumined by the Holy Spirit, they shared the Jewish conception of an *earthly kingdom*. We may say that they were still like little children plucking at the Master's garments and saying, "We know that you are the King of kings; but are you not forgetting your promise to restore the kingdom of David to our nation,—now before you take your leave?" Jesus neither rebukes nor discourages them. He only bids them wait patiently for "the promise of the Father," and directs their attention to the source of power for being His witnesses in ever widening circles "unto the uttermost part of the earth." If they will only do His bidding, God will "restore the kingdom" in His own chosen time. Meanwhile its nature is spiritual and heavenly rather than material and earthly. And it is not meant for the Jews alone, but for all mankind.

Times and seasons (v. 7). That is, critical moments, and periodical epochs, of history.

2. The Ascension. 1. 9–11.

9 And when he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. 10 And while they were looking stedfastly into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; 11 who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven.

He was taken up (v. 9). From the Mount of Olives. The scene of His deepest humiliation in the Garden of Gethsemane was the scene of His final triumph. At the close of His "divine service" on earth the great High Priest lifted up His pierced hands in the act of blessing His Church, and in the midst of the Benediction He "was carried up into heaven," where "he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7. 25). See Lk. 24. 50, 51.

Two men (v. 10). Angels.

White apparel. Symbolizing the purity of their holiness. See Mt. 28. 3; Lk. 24. 4; Rev. 19. 8.

Shall so come (v. 11). Infinitely precious command and promise! "Lose no time in wondering amazement, but return to the Master's work and obey His commandments, till He return 'in like manner' to receive you unto Himself" (Jn. 14. 3).

3. The Ten Days of Waiting. 1. 12–14.

12 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is nigh unto Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey off. 13 And when they were come in, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were abiding; both Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphæus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. 14 These all with one accord continued stedfastly in prayer, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

A sabbath day's journey (v. 12). Three-fourths of a mile, the distance which the law allowed a Jew to travel on the Sabbath.

The upper chamber (v. 13). Most probably the room in which the Last Supper was held (Mk. 14. 15). According to Lk. 24. 53 they also continued to meet in the Temple. Judas Iscariot is absent. He might have been present.

The women (v. 14). No doubt the women Luke mentions in Lk. 8. 2, 3, the women who had also been "last at the cross and first at the grave" (Jn. 19. 25; Lk. 23. 55). Perhaps Martha and Mary of Bethany were among the number. Almost certainly Mary the mother of Mark (Acts 12. 12), who in that case may have been hostess. Possibly too the natural "sisters" of Jesus (Mt. 13. 56). Heretofore women had not been permitted to pray or worship on an equality with men, either in the Temple or the synagogue, but were kept apart by themselves. This distinction between "male and female" was annulled by Christ (Gal. 3. 28).

Mary the mother of Jesus. She is mentioned here for the last time. We leave her, so to speak, on her knees praying. Joseph had no doubt died some time before this.

His brethren. The four half-brothers of Jesus, who once "did not believe on him" (Jn. 7. 5). See Mt. 13. 55.

All these "disciples" spent these ten memorable days of waiting in *prayer.* It was the true kind of "protracted meetings," and they were prayer meetings. The "prayer topic," we may be certain, was the gift of the Holy Spirit, according to the promise of Jesus (v. 5).

With one accord. This expression is repeated nine times in Acts and only once elsewhere in the New Testament

(Rom. 15. 6). They gave diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4. 3), shortly to be cemented by the descent of the Holy Spirit.

4. Matthias. 1. 15–26.

15 And in these days Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren, and said (and there was a multitude of persons gathered together, about a hundred and twenty), 16 Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus. 17 For he was numbered among us, and received his portion in this ministry. 18 (Now this man obtained a field with the reward of his iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. 19 And it became known to all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch that in their language that field was called Akeldama, that is, The field of blood.) 20 For it is written in the book of Psalms,

Let his habitation be made desolate,
And let no man dwell therein:

and,

His office let another take.

21 Of the men therefore that have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and went out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection. 23 And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show of these two the one whom thou hast chosen, 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas fell away, that he might go to his own place.

26 And they gave lots for them; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

A hundred and twenty (v. 15). Ten times the original number of apostles. According to 1 Cor. 15. 6 Jesus appeared after His resurrection to "five hundred brethren at once." The one hundred and twenty were therefore a local group of believers. Among these may have been Simon of Cyrene (Lk. 23. 26), Barnabas, Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and Lazarus. Imagine what it meant for such as these, and the women mentioned, to be there, and what the thoughts and feelings of each one must have been!

Peter stood up. He no doubt felt most keenly the absence of Judas, especially as he must have compared his own denial and restoration with the sad end of the traitor. Possibly also the little congregation was reading from the Scriptures the passages indicated. At all events Peter feels prompted to suggest the completion of the original number of the apostles and bases his proposition on two passages of Scripture, namely, Ps. 69. 25 and 109. 8.

Some students of the Bible are of the opinion that the election of Matthias was premature, and that Christ had chosen *Paul* for this position. The use of the lot is strange. Matthias is never mentioned again. And the Holy Spirit had not yet been given to direct the choice. Nor is there any direct reference to Judas in the passages Peter quotes, and David could hardly have had him in mind. But Peter looks deeper than the mere surface of the letter and says, "*The Holy Spirit* spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas" (v. 16), and there is

nothing in the sacred record to indicate that Peter was mistaken. The words quoted from the two Psalms are therefore to be understood as a *typical* prophecy. "While the Psalmist speaks of himself and his own circumstances, the Holy Spirit was speaking through him of what should happen to 'the Son of David'" (J. R. LUMBY). Compare Jn. 13. 18.

It was needful (v. 16). Peter finds the scandal of Judas' fall relieved by the discovery that it was foretold. The free act of Judas was foreseen by God, included in His providence, and foretold in the Scriptures.

Verses 18 and 19 were not spoken by Peter, but are an explanatory parenthesis by the writer Luke.

Obtained a field (v. 18). That is, after his death, through the purchase made by the chief priests with the money Judas threw at their feet in the Temple (Mt. 25. 5–7).

Falling headlong. It is supposed that Judas hanged himself with his girdle from a tree overhanging a precipice; that the weight of his struggling body caused the knot to slip; and that he dropped on the rocks below, with the result described in this verse.

Their language (v. 19). The Aramaic, a late form of Hebrew.

From the baptism of John (v. 22). The requirement for being an apostle was to have been an associate with Jesus "all the time" from the beginning to the end of His public ministry, including His resurrection and ascension. Only an eye-witness could bear witness and testify to others of this.

Barsabbas. A patronymic, "the son of Sabbas."

Justus. "The just." In addition to the Hebrew name the Jews in Roman times usually bore a second Latin or Greek name.

They prayed (v. 24). The second time that prayer is mentioned in the first chapter and the first of four recorded prayers in Acts (4. 24–30; 7. 59, 60; 21. 14). In every matter they sought the guidance of the Lord in prayer and the grace to know His will.

Who is the "Lord" addressed in this prayer? The Christians were known as those who "called on the name of Jesus" (7. 59; 9. 5, 13–15, 17, 21; 1 Cor. 1. 2). It was the Christ who manifests God and is His visible presence. He had chosen the original Twelve and it was proper that He should be invoked to determine the choice of Matthias. Compare 2 Cor. 5. 19; Jn. 14. 6–10.

Go to his own place (v. 25). Judas had been chosen for one place, but had chosen another place for himself. Note the absence of all doubt as to his fate, but also the reserve of language and the absence of all presumptuous judging.

Gave lots (v. 26). They revived for the last time an Old Testament custom (Lev. 16. 8). It may have been in this manner also that the high priest received his answers from the Lord by means of the Urim and Thummim (Ex. 28. 30). Compare Prov. 16. 33.

Numbered with the eleven. That is, as the twelfth. Observe that the entire Church takes part in the election, by nomination (v. 23), by prayer (v. 24), and in the giving of lots (v. 26).

5. Pentecost. 2. 1–13.

a. The Gift of the Holy Spirit. 2. 1–4.

1 And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

All the events so far lead up to the descent of the Holy Spirit. Acts takes its rise from this great central event. This is the fountainhead of the Book. This is the source, the life, the light, and the power of all that follows. Pentecost is the sunrise that ushers in a new day.

Pentecost (v. 1). A Greek word meaning "fiftieth." The Old Testament Feast of Pentecost was instituted to commemorate the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai on the fiftieth day after the deliverance out of Egypt. It was also the occasion of the annual offering of the first fruits of the harvest. This made it the fitting day for the giving of the Spirit which was to be the zeal of the New Testament Covenant and for the first great harvest of souls.

A mighty wind (v. 2). It was not a natural wind nor natural fire, but "a sound *as of* the rushing of a mighty wind"and "tongues *like as* of fire." Nor was the sound and the fire the Holy Spirit. These were only indications of its presence and symbols of its nature, "outward visible

signs of an inward spiritual grace." Compare 1 K. 19. 11, 12; Lk. 3. 22; Jn. 3. 8.

The wind symbolizes the quickening breath of God. Compare Ezekiel's vision (Ezek. 37. 9, 10). Also Gen. 2. 7; Jn. 3. 8; 20. 22. The fire represents its illuminating and cleansing power. It is the Spirit of God which creates life, kindles a new love in the hearts of men, and inspires His witness to testify of His saving grace and truth. The fire is spoken of as "tongues" to indicate the fervor and burning zeal of the testimony to be given by the disciples and the languages which were to bear the message of the gospel to all the races of the earth.

All filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 4). The fulfilment of Jesus' promise in Jn. 14. 16–18, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth: whom the world cannot receive; for it beholdeth him not, neither knowest him: ye know him; for he abideth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you desolate: I come unto you." This was the "baptism" promised in 1. 5. The *birth* of the Church took place when God kindled faith in Jesus as the Son of God in the hearts of His followers (Mt. 16. 15–18). Pentecost was also the *consecration* of the Church for its work of evangelizing the world.

How many does the word "all" comprise? Not only the twelve apostles, but the entire assembly of believers, representing the whole Church of God. Compare vv. 17, 18.

Other tongues. Not an unintelligible jargon, but the foreign languages of the different nations represented in Jerusalem. It would seem that this "speaking with other tongues" was a different gift from "speaking with tongues" in the Church of Corinth. See 1 Cor. 14. Compare also Acts 10. 46. For the distinction noted here consult the Bible Dictionaries or larger Commentaries. It was a miraculous gift, enabling the disciples to proclaim to the multitudes of pilgrims "the mighty works of God." It signified that the voice of the Holy Spirit is to be heard and understood by "every nation under heaven."

b. Immediate Effects. 2. 5–13.

5 Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own language. 7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galilæans? 8 And how hear we, every man in our own language wherein we were born? 9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judæa and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, 10 in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our tongues the mighty works of God. 12 And they were all amazed, and were perplexed, saying one to another, What meaneth this? 13 But others mocking said, They are filled with new wine.

Wherein we were born (v. 8). There were Jews in all parts of the Roman Empire. These adopted the language of the country where they resided and where many of them had been born. The great Feasts in Jerusalem,

the religious center of every devout Jew, brought many pilgrims to the city for worship. Others came to pass the remainder of their lives in the shadow of the holy Temple.

Fourteen countries and provinces are mentioned (vv. 9–11). Four countries east of Palestine; the district of Judæa itself; five provinces of Asia Minor, north of Palestine; two countries of northern Africa; the political capital of the empire; one island in the Mediterranean Sea; and the Sinaitic peninsula on the south. See Bible maps.

Proselytes (v. 10). Gentile converts to the Jewish religion.

They were all amazed (v. 12). The "devout men" marveled, but some of "the multitude" mocked and explained what they saw and heard by saying that the disciples were intoxicated.

A. Acts of Peter. 2. 14--12. 25.

I. IN JERUSALEM. 2. 14—8. 4.

1. Peter's Sermon. 2. 14–17.

a. The Address. 2. 14–36.

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judæa, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. 15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day; 16 but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel:

17 And it shall be in the last days, saith God,
I will pour forth of my Spirit upon all flesh:
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
And your young men shall see visions,
And your old men shall dream dreams:
18 Yea and on my servants and on my hand maidens in those days
Will I pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy.
19 And I will show wonders in the heaven above,
And signs on the earth beneath;
Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke:
20 The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the day of the Lord come,
That great and notable day:
21 And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders

and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; 23 him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: 24 whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. 25 For David saith concerning him,

I beheld the Lord always before my face;
For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved:
26 Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope:
27 Because thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades,
Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption.
28 Thou madest known unto me the ways of life;
Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance.

29 Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. 30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; 31 he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. 34 For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself,

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,
35 Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.

36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

This brings us to the First Main Division of Acts, where Peter is the leading spirit. The scene is Jerusalem,

the place where the apostles were to begin their testimony as witnesses of Christ (1. 8), and where the Church, founded by the Holy Spirit, was to be established by their labors. The first members were all Jews or proselytes. The first seven chapters cover a period of about eight years, from 29 to 37 A.D. Luke has recorded only the most important or significant incidents. Peter's sermon is such an outstanding and epochal event. Its contents may be outlined as follows:

Introduction: Explanation. 14–21.

Theme: Jesus is the Messiah, as shown by His resurrection. 22.

1. The resurrection declared. 23, 24.
2. The resurrection predicted. 25–31.
3. The resurrection attested. 32.
4. The resurrection proved. 33–35.

Conclusion: Personal application. 36.

The third hour (v. 15). 9 A.M. On festival days the Jews tasted nothing until the morning service in the Temple was over, about 10 A.M.

Peter quotes the words of Joel to explain the experience of those who "spoke with other tongues." He of course gives the passage from memory, which shows his familiarity with the Scriptures. Compare the quotation with the original words in Joel 2. 28–32. The prophecy has a wider range than its application here. Like all prophecy its divine content is not exhausted by single historical events. It will receive another and still more evident fulfillment "in the last days" of the present age.

But even here, at the end of the Old Testament world, these verses, including v. 20, receive a true spiritual fulfillment.

Ye did crucify and slay (v. 23). God gave His Son to die for the sins of the world. He foresaw the need and the manner of His death. But the Jews loaned themselves to do the deed. Their unbelief and wickedness made them willing tools of Satan. They were therefore guilty murderers of Jesus.

Loosed the pangs (v. 24). Terminated the birth-throes. Jesus was, as it were, born out of the travail of His death into a new life. It was not possible for death to keep the sinless Son of God. The Jews killed Him, but God made Him alive.

David saith concerning him (v. 25). Ps. 16. 8–11. The Spirit of God, which inspired the Scriptures and now filled Peter, enabled the apostle to see that what David apparently says of himself alone is in reality a prophecy regarding Christ. David "saw corruption." Verse 29 contains the proof of this. Consequently the Psalm could not apply to him. It applies to "David's greater Son," whose flesh did *not* "see corruption," that is, experience physical dissolution and decay.

Hades (v. 27). The realm into which all souls enter upon death and from which they pass on into heaven or into hell. Compare 1 Pet. 3. 19.

The Lord said unto my Lord (v. 34). Compare the use Jesus Himself makes of this passage in Mt. 22. 44 to prove His own deity. No doubt Peter was present on that

occasion, and what he heard from his Master's lips had made a deep and indelible impression on his mind. The Spirit was now taking of the things of Jesus and declaring it unto Peter (Jn. 16. 14).

The Conclusion follows (v. 36). Jesus of Nazareth is shown to be *more* than "man" (v. 22). The resurrection proves that God made Him that "Lord" of whom David spoke, and the "Christ" of Scripture for whom the Jews were hoping. Therefore they should not look for another Messiah (Mt. 11. 3), but believe in Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and Christ and be saved by faith in Him.

b. The Effect of the Sermon. 2. 37–41.

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? 38 And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him. 40 And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. 41 They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.

Pricked in their heart (v. 37). The Holy Spirit used the words of Scripture and the preaching of Peter to bring his hearers under conviction of sin. They realized their guilt of consenting to the death of Jesus and of failing to accept Him as their Messiah. This marks the beginning of the work of the Spirit as foretold by Jesus: "And he,

when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (Jn. 16. 8).

Peter's reply to their question is a double command and a double promise: Repent, and be baptized; remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit (v. 38). In doing this he is obeying the great commandment of his Lord, "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Mt. 28. 19, 20). To the apostles baptism "in the name of Jesus Christ" was baptism in the name of the triune God. Compare 10. 48; 19. 5; Rom. 6. 3.

Save yourselves (v. 40). That is, by complying with what he had just said and accepting the salvation which God offers in Christ. By the means of grace He will grant them grace to do this, in answer to the prayer of their hearts. Compare Phil. 2. 12, 13.

Three thousand souls (v. 41). The first fruits of the gospel harvest which is to grow into that "great multitude which no man could number, out of every nation and of all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne of the Lamb" (Rev. 7. 9).

In that day. This expression is frequently used of an extended period of time and is not necessarily limited to a day of twelve or twenty-four hours. So understood here, there need be no difficulty about the physical possibility of baptizing this great number of converts.

c. The Life of the Converts. 2. 42–47.

42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. 46 And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.

Verses 38 and 41 show how members were *added* to the church; v. 42, how membership was *maintained;* and vv. 43–47, how membership was *manifested*. Members were *added* by hearing and receiving the Word of God, by repentance, by faith in Christ as their Saviour, by the assurance of forgiveness, by baptism, and by the gift of the Holy Spirit. Membership was *maintained* by the faithful observance of four things: (1) The apostles' teaching, instead of, as before, the teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees. The substance of this teaching would be *doctrinal* (repentance and faith), *sacramental* (baptisms and the laying on of hands), and *eschatological* (resurrection and judgment), as given in Heb. 6. 1, 2. (2) Fellowship. That is partnership in all things, both temporal and spiritual blessings. This is the original idea of "the communion of saints." (3) The breaking of bread. This refers to the solemn sacred meal called Agapé, or Love-feast, which was eaten in common and was concluded with the Lord's Supper. This Love-feast soon

degenerated into serious abuse. See 1 Cor. 11. 20–22. For this reason the Lord's Supper was early separated from the Agapé by a night and observed on the following morning instead. By the seventh century the Love-feast was discontinued entirely. (4) The Prayers. "The" refers to stated seasons of prayer, prayer meetings, both public and private, in the Temple and the synagogues, and in the homes.

Had all things in common (v. 44). This and the following verses describe the "fellowship" of v. 42. It is specified in the Greek by the definite article "the." It was a form of Christian communism. Doubtless many of the Christians were prompted to this "partnership" by the belief that Jesus would soon return. It is to be observed, however, that this fellowship differed widely from the political communism of our own day. It was a *temporary* arrangement in the interest of the poor. Its purpose was to relieve those who "had *need.*" It was entirely *voluntary,* as shown by Peter's statement to Ananias (5. 4). Mary the mother of Mark retained her home (12. 12). After 6. 1, 2 there is no further mention of a common fund. Nevertheless this fellowship remains an ideal toward which the Spirit of Christ continues to direct his true followers and the loss of which in any age indicates a love that is "waxing cold" (Mt. 24. 12). Natural selfishness, the spirit of the world, and the want of faith in God and love of the brother, make its realization impossible to-day. In heaven meanwhile it is a blessed reality, and in the measure that the love of Christ finds

room in the hearts of men, a regenerate Church will approximate this ideal in the kingdom of heaven on earth.

In the temple (v. 46). Some of the larger gatherings were held in the outer portico of the Temple, but the sacred meal was celebrated in the private homes.

Breaking bread. The solemn manner of beginning the meal and the act of "saying grace" (Mt. 26. 26; Lk. 24. 30).

Added to them (v. 47). Compare vv. 41 and 47 and observe that it was *the Lord* who "added to them day by day those that were saved." The original Greek has, "were being saved," or "were in the way of salvation." Like her Lord, the Church "waxed strong in spirit" and "advanced in favor with God and men" (Lk. 1. 80; 2. 52).

2. The Lame Man Healed. 3. 1–26.

a. The Miracle. 3. 1–10.

1 Now Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour. 2 And a certain man that was lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; 3 who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked to receive an alms. 4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him, with John, said, Look on us. 5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive somthing from them. 6 But Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk. 7 And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his

feet and his ankle-bones received strength. 8 And leaping up, he stood, and began to walk; and he entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 10 and they took knowledge of him, that it was he that sat for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.

Peter and John (v. 1). Observe throughout the sacred story the close tie of friendship between these two disciples and the number of times we find the two together: Lk. 22. 8; Jn. 18. 15, 16; 20. 2–5; 21. 7, 20–22; Acts 3. 1; 4. 13; 8. 14.

The hour of prayer. The hours of prayer were 9 A.M., 12 M., and 3 P.M. "The ninth hour" was 3 P.M.

Was carried (v. 2). He was being carried to the gate, just as Peter and John arrived.

Called Beautiful. The Gate of Nicanor, also called the Beautiful Gate. This was the eastern gate of the Temple, leading from the outer Court of the Gentiles into the Court of the Women. It was made of Corinthian brass and richly studded with silver and gold. Possibly Peter was looking at this gate and comparing its splendor with the condition of the cripple and his own poverty when the beggar "asked to receive an alms." This would give added significance to his reply, "Silver and gold have I none." But Peter was rich in *faith* (Jas. 2. 5; Rev. 2. 9), and in that faith he made the poor cripple richer than all the wealth represented by the costly Beautiful Gate.

Ankle-bones (v. 7). A technical anatomical term which indicates the interest and language of "Luke the

physician" (Col. 4. 14). Observe the vivid description in v. 8: "leaping up," "stood," "began to walk," "entered," "walking," "leaping," "praising God," and "he held Peter and John" (v. 11). Observe also the effect on the people in the Temple (vv. 9, 10). The miracle is recorded because it led to the first persecution.

b. Peter's Discourse. 3. 11–26.

11 And as he held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. 12 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this man? or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk? 13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. 14 But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, 15 and killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. 16 And by faith in his name hath his name made this man strong, whom ye behold and know: yea, the faith which is through him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. 17 And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. 18 But the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled. 19 Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; 20 and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: 21 whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from

of old. 22 Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. 23 And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days. 25 Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

The porch that is called Solomon's (v. 11). The portico on the east side of the Temple, called Solomon's because it was built on the foundations of the old Temple of Solomon.

He answered (v. 12). Namely, the silent questions of the wondering people.

Servant (v. 13). The name given to the coming Messiah in the prophecy of Isaiah (Is. 42. 1; 52. 13; 53. 11).

Emphasize *ye, Holy and Righteous One, murderer, killed, life, God raised* (vv. 14, 15), to bring out the antitheses.

Name (v. 16). The person and power of Jesus.

That his Christ should suffer (v. 18). See Ps. 22; Is. 50. 6; 53. 5; Lk. 24. 25, 26.

Seasons of refreshing (v. 19). Namely, after the sufferings preceding the second return of Jesus.

That he may send (v. 20). The idea that the second coming may be hastened or retarded by the conduct of

His people is expressed by Peter again in 2 Pet. 3. 12 (margin).

The times of restoration of all things (v. 21). See Mt. 17. 11; 19. 28; Rom. 8. 18–23; 2 Pet. 3. 13.

Moses indeed said (v. 22). See Dt. 18. 15, 19.

Sons (v. 25). In the sense of *heirs* of the blessing promised to Abraham and his spiritual descendants (1. 26). Compare 2. 39; Gal. 3. 7–9.

Unto you first (v. 26). First to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles (Rom. 1. 16; 2. 9).

Compare this address of Peter with his sermon on Pentecost and observe how once again he tries to convict his hearers of sin, preaches the resurrection of Christ, quotes Scripture to prove the truth of his message, and promises forgiveness of sin, "seasons of refreshing," and the second coming of Christ.

3. Arrest of Peter and John. 4. 1–37.

a. Their Apprehension. 4. 1–4.

1 And as they spake unto the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, 2 being sore troubled because they taught the people, and proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in ward unto the morrow: for it was now eventide. 4 But many of them that heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Captain of the temple (v. 1). A priest next in dignity to the high priest and chief officer of the temple guard of Levites.

The Sadducees came. The priests were the religious leaders of the Jews and were "sore troubled" because these laymen presumed to "teach the people" without their sanction. This act of the apostles threatened the monopoly and endangered the influence of the recognized authorities. The Sadducees did not believe in any resurrection (23. 8) and were angry because Peter "proclaimed in Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Many of the leading priests were also Sadducees (5. 17).

Now eventide (v. 3). It was not legal to hold a session between sundown and sunrise. Compare 3. 1.

But many believed (v. 4). Peter and John spent the night in a prison, but through the testimony they had given the number of converts to the Christian faith grew from three thousand (2. 41) to five thousand.

b. The Trial. 4. 5–12.

5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; 6 and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest. 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, By what power, or in what name, have ye done this? 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders, 9 if we this day are examined concerning a good deed done to an impotent man, by what means this man is made whole; 10 be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11 He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. 12 And in none other

is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.

The *rulers* were those who had held the office of high priest. The *scribes* were the trained expounders of the Law. The *elders* were wealthy and prominent members of the Jewish church. These, together with the reigning high priest and his "kindred," constituted the Sanhedrin of seventy-one members. This Council was the Senate and Supreme Court of Jerusalem. *Caiaphas,* the son-in-law of Annas, was the acting high priest, appointed by the Roman Government, but *Annas,* who had been deposed in favor of Caiaphas, was still considered by the people as the legitimate incumbent of the office. See Lk. 3. 2; Jn. 18. 13. These judges now met in formal session "on the morrow," in the Court Room of the Temple, and it was before this august and powerful body that Peter and John, as Jesus before them, were brought to trial. They were in a situation very much similar to that in which two Roman Catholic laborers would be in the presence of the pope and all his cardinals in Rome.

By what power, or in what name (v. 7). By what right, by whose authority. The question was intended to intimidate the two humble prisoners. But the once timid Peter had been transformed by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. He was now the "Rock," fixed and fearless in faith. Every word that he spoke was uncompromisingly in honor of his Saviour and Lord, and Christ redeemed the promise He had given His disciples, "And when they bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and the authorities, be not anxious how

or what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that very hour what ye ought to say" (Lk. 12. 11, 12).

Ye. "Such as you."

If we this day (v. 9). "If" is skillfully used by Peter for "since," or "because." He knew very well what the real reason was for their arrest and trial, and we may be certain that the rebuke of his irony was not lost upon the crafty and criminal judges.

The name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (v. 10). This in reply to their question in v. 7. Once again, in the hope of bringing them to repentance, Peter charges the leaders with the murder of Jesus; and once again, in the hope of bringing them to faith, he proclaims His resurrection.

This man. The healed cripple still kept close to his benefactors and had boldly entered with them into the council chamber of the Sanhedrin. See v. 14.

He is the stone (v. 11). A reference to the prophecy of Ps. 118. 22, which Peter boldly applies to "you the builders," in the sense of "teachers." This application he had learned from Jesus. See Mt. 21. 33–46. He uses the quotation again in 1 Pet. 2. 4–8.

Head of the corner. The corner stone of the foundation or the crowning stone of a tower, or the keystone of an arch.

In none other is there salvation (v. 12). This ringing conclusian of his testimony should be carefully noted and treasured in the heart.

c. The Release. 4. 13–22.

13 Now when they beheld the boldness of Peter and John, and had perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. 14 And seeing the man that was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it. 15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, 16 saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle had been wrought through them, is manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. 17 But that it spread no further among the people, let us threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18 And they called them, and charged them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it is right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye: 20 for we cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard. 21 And they, when they had further threatened them, let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done. 22 For the man was more than forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was wrought.

Unlearned and ignorant (v. 13). That is, not educated in rabbinical theology, not trained in their schools. *Ignorant* means "private persons" or laymen without professional knowledge.

Took knowledge of them. According to Jn. 18. 15 John "was known unto the high priest" (Caiaphas), but that dignitary evidently finds it expedient not to know the acquaintance standing before him now. The judges notice that as the Master's words had been powerful before and during His trial, so there was like power in the

language of His disciples. Such evidence there should be in the life and testimony of all His followers, so that men may take knowledge of *us* that we have "been with Jesus."

In vv. 16–18, 21 we recognize the same spirit of dishonest circumspection that we find in Mt. 21. 23–27; while in vv. 19, 20 we recognize the Spirit of the divine Witness in the same passage. Compare 5. 29.

d. The Reception of the Brethren. 4. 23–31.

23 And being let go, they came to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said unto them. 24 And they, when they heard it, lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, O Lord, thou that didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: 25 who by the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David thy servant, didst say,

Why did the Gentiles rage,
And the peoples imagine vain things?

26 The kings of the earth set themselves in array,
And the rulers were gathered together,
Against the Lord, and against his Anointed:

27 for of a truth in this city against thy holy Servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together, 28 to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel foreordained to come to pass. 29 And now, Lord, look upon their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants to speak thy word with all boldness, 30 while thou stretchest forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of thy holy Servant Jesus. 31 And when they had prayed, the place was shaken wherein they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

The fellow-Christians of the two apostles had no doubt been spending the anxious hours of the night and morning in prayer. Compare 12. 5. When Peter and John brought back the report of their release, the first act of the company was to "lift up their voice to God with one accord" in thanksgiving and praise (v. 24).

And now, Lord (v. 24). Addressed to God. It is significant, however, that the original word, here rendered "Lord," is applied by Peter and Jude to Jesus (2 Pet. 2. 1; Jude 4).

Thou that didst make. That is, "Thou Almighty God." They see in this experience a sign of His power and the prophetic fulfillment of His word in Ps. 2. They take comfort in the promises of God and in this indication of His overruling providence.

Thou didst anoint (v. 27). Compare Is. 61. 1; Mt. 3. 16; Acts 10. 38.

Herod. Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great (Lk. 23. 6–12.

Pilate. The sixth Roman procurator or governor of Judæa, 25–36 A.D. (Mt. 27. 11–26).

Thy counsel foreordained (v. 28). Compare 2. 23, and note to 1. 16.

Look upon their threatenings (v. 29). A prayer to be shielded from these powerful enemies of the faith.

With all boldness. Their prayer had already been heard in the witnessing of Peter and John. It was heard now, as they proceeded with their preaching and teaching, regardless of the threat of the Sanhedrin (vv. 31, 33). It

was heard immediately again, when the Twelve were again arrested and brought to trial before the Council (5. 29–32).

Stretch forth thy hand (v. 30). The third petition in their prayer, namely, for "signs and wonders" to serve as the divine approval and seal of their testimony.

The place was shaken (v. 31). A second Pentecostal manifestation in answer to their prayer, when once again "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit."

e. The Resulting Fellowship. 4. 32–37.

32 And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of *them* said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common. 33 And with great power gave the apostles their witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. 34 For neither was there among them any that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 and laid them at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto each, according as any one had need.

36 And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, Son of exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, 37 having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

This first persecution brought the believers nearer together and united them in still closer ties of "the fellowship." The temporal possessions of each were placed at the disposal of all, according to their needs (vv. 34, 35. See notes on 2. 42–47.

Barnabas (v. 36). He is especially mentioned because he was shortly to become the missionary companion of Paul. It may also be that his "field" was of considerable value and realized an exceptionally large sum for the common fund.

Exhortation. A word meaning both "consolation" and "encouragement" (2 Cor. 1. 3, 4). The phrase means that Barnabas was what we would call "a great preacher."

4. Ananias and Sapphira. 5. 1–11.

a. Ananias. 5. 1–6.

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2 and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4 While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power? How is it that thou hast conceived this thing in thy heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost: and great fear came upon all that heard it. 6 And the young men arose and wrapped him around, and they carried him out and buried him.

The sin of Ananias did not consist in keeping back part of the price. To this he had a perfect right, according to v. 4. His real sin was a *lie*. In making this contribution to the common fund he represented the part he gave as the *whole* price. There was also greed and vain ambi-

tion in the deed, but the grave offence was hypocrisy. The Church had been tried from without by persecution. Now it was tried from within by dissimulation that threatened to poison the love of the Church and destroy the work of the Holy Spirit. This deception was "tares among the wheat" (Mt. 13. 25). It was a serpent in the paradise of the infant Church. Hence the strong arm of church discipline must be employed to crush it. It was necessary that it should meet with severe and summary punishment. Peter's immediate knowledge of Ananias' falsehood was inspired by the Holy Spirit. The judgment inflicted on Ananias was not the act of Peter, but of God.

A possession (v. 1). A piece of property.

Privy to it (v. 2). In the secret.

Lied unto God (v. 4). Ananias had indeed lied unto men, but all sin is sin against God, and the serious part of the offence was not the lie to men, but the lie to the Spirit of God (v. 3), the holy Spirit of Truth.

Buried him (v. 6). In the warm eastern countries it was customary to bury the dead without delay, especially among the poorer classes.

b. Sapphira. 5. 7–11.

7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. 8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much. And she said, Yea, for so much. 9 But Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to try the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them that have buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out. 10 And she fell down immediately at his feet, and gave up the ghost: and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her by her husband. 11 And great fear came upon the whole church, and upon all that heard these things.

Sapphira may have taken only a secondary part in the fraud. Ananias is represented as the one who kept back part of the price and Sapphira as knowing about it and keeping it secret. Perhaps for this reason Peter gives her an opportunity to tell the truth (v. 8). But by a double affirmation of the falsehood she aggravates her possibly smaller part in the offence and thereby seals her own doom. She proves to be a willing accomplice with her husband in the attempt to deceive the Church.

For so much (v. 8). Perhaps Peter points to the money lying at the apostles' feet (v. 2) and suggests that she count it.

Carry thee out (v. 9). Peter knew in the Spirit that she would share in the punishment of her husband, and so he announces, rather than pronounces, the judgment.

By her husband (v. 10). Companions in sin, and companions in the burial ground! Of their eternal destiny

the sacred record gives us only—silence. No wonder that "fear came upon the whole church."

The term "church" is used here for the first time in Acts.

5. Signs and Wonders. 5. 12–16.

12 And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people: and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. But of the rest durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the people magnified them; 14 and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women: 15 insomuch that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some one of them. 16 And there also came together the multitude from the cities round about Jerusalem, bringing sick folk, and them that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

Signs and wonders (v. 12). Verses 12, 15, 16 give the answer to the third petition in 4. 29, 30. Compare 19. 11, 12. It was evident that these remarkable cures should be noted by Luke the physician. Observe the wondering and joyful surprise of the language in v. 16, "and they were healed every one."

Solomon's porch. This long covered colonade offered spacious room for the gatherings of the Christians.

The rest (v. 13). The non-believers.

Magnified. Revered them and refrained from intruding upon them.

6. The Arrest of the Twelve. 5. 17–42.

a. The Double Arrest. 5. 17–26.

17 But the high priest rose up, and all they that were with
him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled
with jealousy, 18 and laid hands on the apostles, and put them
in public ward. 19 But an angel of the Lord by night opened
the prison doors, and brought them out, and said, 20 Go ye,
and stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words
of this Life. 21 And when they heard this, they entered into
the temple about daybreak, and taught. But the high priest
came, and they that were with him, and called the council to-
gether, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to
the prison-house to have them brought. 22 But the officers that
came found them not in the prison; and they returned, and
told, 23 saying, The prison-house we found shut in all safety,
and the keepers standing at the doors: but when we had opened,
we found no man within. 24 Now when the captain of the
temple and the chief priests heard these words, they were much
perplexed concerning them whereunto this would grow. 25 And
there came one and told them, Behold, the men whom ye put in
the prison are in the temple standing and teaching the people.
26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them,
but without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should
be stoned.

Verse 29 ("Peter and the apostles") shows that this time the arrest included several or all of the Twelve. This time, too, punishment was inflicted in the form of beating as well as imprisonment. The reason for the increasing hostility was the same "jealousy" that had inspired the first arrest (4. 2).

The angel of the Lord (v. 19). Another evidence of the power of God manifested through these "heavenly

visitants." Compare v. 23. Also 12. 6, 7, 10; Heb. 1. 14. An *angel,* as if in protest against the proceedings of those who taught that "there was neither angel nor spirit" (23. 8)! Observe that the Sadducean high priest did not ask a single question about their remarkable escape from prison (v. 28). It may be that Caiaphas remembered how Jesus had disappeared mysteriously out of His grave, in spite of the guard set to watch it.

Go ye (v. 20). The message of the Lord through this servant from heaven. The Lord himself regards the preaching of the gospel as of supreme importance. He opens prison doors that His Word may not be bound (2 Tim. 2. 9).

This Life. The life of God in Christ; the spiritual life of believers in Christ; the life of their Christian conduct; the truth of the Christian religion (1 Jn. 1. 2; 5. 11, 12). Later on this Life is called the Way.

The senate (v. 21). "Council" and "senate" both refer to the Sanhedrin, the supreme Jewish legislative and administrative body. Theophilus, the Roman official for whom Luke wrote the Acts, would more readily understand what the Sanhedrin was by the name "senate."

Much perplexed (v. 24). They seemed to realize that a supernatural power was arrayed against them and that the end was not yet in sight. Compare Ps. 2. 4. But as the situation was becoming desperate for them, they did not scruple about methods or means. They were only careful not to be too aggressive and run the risk of losing caste entirely with the people (v. 26).

Brought them (v. 26). The second arrest. See v. 18.

b. The Trial. 5. 27–32.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them, saying, We strictly charged you not to teach in this name: and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. 29 But Peter and the apostles answered and said, We must obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree. 31 Him did God exalt with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. 32 And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

We strictly charged you (v. 28). He now charges the apostles with contempt of court.

Bring this man's blood upon us. Make us guilty of His death. Compare 2. 23; 3. 14, 15; 4. 10. Notice how carefully Caiaphas twice avoids to mention the name of Jesus. It is the language of a guilty man filled with uneasy fear. Perhaps he was remembering his advice to the Sanhedrin about Jesus (Jn. 11. 49, 50) and the cry of the people at His trial, "His blood be upon us and on our children" (Mt. 27. 25).

We must obey God rather than men (v. 29). As the earlier reprimand of the Council had been disregarded, so now their reprimand failed to intimidate the apostles. Peter waxes even bolder and in the face of what they had just said repeats his charge, "whom ye slew." Compare 2 Sam. 12. 7, "Thou art the man." Peter's speech contains the substance of what he had said twice before. Under his plain speaking we see the yearning of his heart

that through his testimony even these persecutors might know the meaning of "repentance" and "remission of sins." But by the implication of Peter's words, that they did not "obey" God and therefore did not have His Holy Spirit, they were "cut to the heart" (v. 33). They hardened their hearts against the truth and persevered in their impenitence. Therefore the spirit of the "murderer from the beginning" took possession of their hearts and filled them with murderous hatred. It is quite probable that Saul was one of their number.

c. Gamaliel's Advice. 5. 33–42.

33 But they, when they heard this, were cut to the heart, and were minded to slay them. 34 But there stood up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in honor of all the people, and commanded to put the men forth a little while. 35 And he said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves as touching these men, what ye are about to do. 36 For before these days rose up Theudas, giving himself out to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were dispersed, and came to nought. 37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the enrolment, and drew away some of the people after him: he also perished; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered abroad. 38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will be overthrown: 39 but if it is of God, ye will not be able to overthrow them; lest haply ye be found even to be fighting against God. 40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles unto them, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 They therefore departed from the presence of the council, re-

joicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name. 42 And every day, in the temple and at home, they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus as the Christ.

Gamaliel was the most famous and influential rabbi of his time. Paul had sat as a student at his feet (22. 3). This "doctor of the law" belonged to the *progressive* school of theology, as over against the conservative and reactionary school of one Simon. This would tend to make Gamaliel liberal-minded, but without being at all prejudiced in favor of the Christians. His intelligence also made him shrewd. He saw that extreme measures would not be good policy. Hence his advice and the deference even the Sadducees in the Council showed to the opinion of this Pharisee (v. 40). And yet there may have been some "latent" sympathy" in his heart with this new movement. He shared their faith in the resurrection. He does not explicitly place Jesus in the same class with Theudas and Judas. He seems to leave this to be inferred by his colleagues, while he keeps his own thoughts to himself. The language of v. 69, moreover, would imply that his suggestion was something more than discreet moderation and toleration. It almost takes on the appearance of a guarded admission of the truth.

Theudas and Judas (vv. 36, 37). These men were revolutionary leaders. The insurrection of the Theudas mentioned by the Jewish historian Josephus did not take place till some ten years later. Luke must therefore refer to an earlier and unknown Theudas. Judas of Galilee took the lead in a revolt brought on by the imposition of new and exceedingly heavy taxes about 6 A.D.

Enrolment (v. 37). Census, for the purpose of taxation. Compare Lk. 2. 1.

They beat them (v. 40). For disregarding their first command "not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus" (4. 18). Also for making these religious leaders responsible for the death of Jesus (v. 28). The apostles were beaten with the terrible "scourge." This consisted of three strips of heavy leather attached to a short handle. The thongs were studded with sharp pieces of iron, which tore the flesh into bloody shreds. The victim was struck thirteen times, making "forty stripes save one." Paul suffered this inhuman punishment five times (2 Cor. 11. 24). This was also the treatment meted out to our Saviour (Jn. 19. 1). The scourging was so painful and brutal that very often the sufferer died under the lash.

Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer (v. 41). Marvelous miracle of God's grace! Compare 16. 23–25. Is this grace ours?

At home (v. 42). In the various homes of the Christians.

They ceased not to preach Jesus. They obeyed God rather than men (5. 29).

7. The Seven. 6. 1–7.

1 Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should

forsake the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. 4 But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaüs a proselyte of Antioch; 6 whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them.

7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

The Seven were elected to have charge of the business of the church. This consisted of distributing food and money to the poor, especially to widows. In that day widowed women did not have the opportunities for self-support possible to-day and their lot was particularly hard. The Seven have been called deacons, but the term does not occur in these verses and is not used with reference to any one of them. The only designation they receive is "the seven" (21. 8). They were rather stewards or "trustees." "Deacons" are not mentioned till the time of Paul's first imprisonment (Phil. 1. 1; 1 Tim. 3. 8, 10, 12, 13). The word, however, means "one who serves," and the verb occurs in v. 2. Possibly therefore the term used later for the office was derived from this verb, though the same word is used of the work of the apostles themselves in v. 4 ("ministry," that is, "service").

Grecian Jews (v. 1). Greek-speaking Jews from the outlying countries. *Hebrews.* Aramaic-speaking Jews of

Judæa. The widows of the latter were favored in preference to the former who complained because of the partiality shown "in the daily ministration" or distribution.

Look ye out (v. 3). Select. The nomination and election was to be made by the Church. The number seven was probably fixed on because that was the number of men chosen to manage the public business of Jewish towns. The qualifications of these deacon-trustees were three in number: "of good report," "full of the (Holy) Spirit," and full of "wisdom" (practical ability and tact).

Continue stedfastly in prayer (v. 4). The business of the apostles, the spiritual leaders of the church, was not only "the ministry of the word," that is, preaching the gospel. It was also *prayer*. This was considered of equal importance, and indeed is mentioned *first*. Verses 3 and 4 should serve as a mirror and as a source of inspiration to pastors and church officers of all times.

And they chose (v. 5). It is significant that the names are all Greek, indicating that men were selected who could be trusted to keep the rights of the Greek-speaking widows in mind. One of the men was not even a Jew, but a proselyte. See note on 2. 10. Two of the Seven figure prominently in the following chapters, namely, Stephen and Philip. They were installed in their new office by prayer and the imposition of hands by the apostles (v. 6).

Thus the Church *founded* by the giving of the Holy Spirit, and *established* by the labors of the apostles, was here *organized* by the election of church officers.

A great company of priests (v. 7). This is mentioned as specially significant because they had taken a prominent part in the crucifixion of Jesus, many of them were Sadducees, and their conversion meant loss of position and revenue and exposed them to a double measure of hatred and persecution.

8. Stephen. 6. 8–60.

a. His Arrest. 6. 8–15.

8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people. 9 But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called the synagogue of the Libertines, and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and Asia, disputing with Stephen. 10 And they were not able to withstand the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spake. 11 Then they suborned men, who said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. 12 And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and seized him, and brought him into the council, 13 and set up false witnesses, who said, This man ceaseth not to speak words against this holy place, and the law: 14 for we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us. 15 And all that sat in the council, fastening their eyes on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.

Hitherto it was the apostles who had been singled out for the hostility of the Jewish authorities. Now the entire church becomes the object of general attack. Stephen, one of the Seven, is the first target and becomes the

first Christian martyr. In his martyrdom the Christian Church has its first taste of the persecution which was to mark its history for the next 300 years. Its beginning in Jerusalem is described in Heb. 10. 32–34.

Libertines (v. 9). Freedmen. Descendants of Jewish prisoners of war brought to Rome. Some manuscripts read "Libyans," that is, Jews from Libya of North Africa.

Cyrenians. Jews from Cyrene, North Africa.

Alexandrians. Jews from Alexandria of Egypt.

Cilicia and Asia. Provinces of southern Asia Minor. All these Jews appear to have had a synagogue in common in Jerusalem.

Suborned men (v. 11). Procured false witnesses (vv. 13, 14). Compare the same manner of procedure with Jesus (Mt. 26. 59–61). They accused Stephen of treason and blasphemy against "Moses," "God," "this holy place" (the Temple, in which the Sadducees also had their council chamber), "the law" (of Moses), and "the customs" (the whole Jewish system). Judging by the contents of Stephen's address (chapter 7) the truth of their perversion must have been that he had said that God was not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, that His worship was no longer to be restricted to the Temple in Jerusalem, and that Christians were not bound to observe the rites and ceremonies of the Law of Moses. This would be in direct opposition to the traditional orthodoxy of the Jewish leaders.

The face of an angel (v. 15). Indicating his peace with God and the inner triumph of his soul.

b. Stephen's Address. 7. 1–53.

The main theme of Stephen's address is *The Omnipresence of God,* as over against its limitation to the particular locality of Canaan, Jerusalem, and the Temple, on which the Jewish leaders insisted. The Divisions of the Address are: I. Abraham (vv. 2–8). II. Joseph (vv. 9–16). III. Moses (vv. 17–43). IV. Solomon (vv. 44–50). V. Conclusion (vv. 51–53). In the last verses he begins to speak of the Law, as if to indicate that this was to be a second part of his address, when he was interrupted and silenced. He was not given time to refute the other charge that "Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place" (6. 14).

We shall divide the speech under the headings given above, in order the better to follow the argument.

I. ABRAHAM. 7. 1–8.

1 And the high priest said, Are these things so? 2 And he said,

Brethren and fathers, hearken: The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, 3 and said unto him, Get thee out of thy land, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. 4 Then came he out of the land of the Chaldæans, and dwelt in Haran: and from thence, when his father was dead, God removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell: 5 and he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: and he promised that he would give it to him in possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child. 6 And God spake on this wise, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land, and that they should

bring them into bondage, and treat them ill, four hundred years. 7 And the nation to which they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place. 8 And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs.

That is, it was not in Canaan, but in the heathen land of Mesopotamia, that God appeared to "our father Abraham." Consequently God is not confined to Jerusalem.

II. JOSEPH. 7. 9–16.

And the patriarchs, moved with jealousy against Joseph, sold him into Egypt: and God was with him, 10 and delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. 11 Now there came a famine over all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. 12 But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent forth our fathers the first time. 13 And at the second time Joseph was made known to his brethren; and Joseph's race became manifest unto Pharaoh. 14 And Joseph sent, and called to him Jacob his father, and all his kindred, three score and fifteen souls. 15 And Jacob went down into Egypt; and he died, himself and our fathers; 16 and they were carried over unto Shechem, and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a price in silver of the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

Joseph was "governor" in Egypt, not in Canaan, and God was with him there. Even his father Jacob and his brothers came down to Egypt, and God provided for them and blessed them in that foreign country. Joseph and possibly some of his brothers were buried in Shechem, in what was later the despised Samaria, and not in Judæa or Jerusalem (Josh. 24. 32).

III. MOSES. 7. 17–43.

17 But as the time of the promise drew nigh which God vouchsafed unto Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt, 18 till there arose another king over Egypt, who knew not Joseph. 19 The same dealt craftily with our race, and ill-treated our fathers, that they should cast out their babes to the end they might not live. 20 At which season Moses was born, and was exceeding fair; and he was nourished three months in his father's house: 21 and when he was cast out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for her own son. 22 And Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians; and he was mighty in his words and works. 23 But when he was well-nigh forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong he defended him, and avenged him that was oppressed, smiting the Egyptian: 25 and he supposed that his brethren understood that God by his hand was giving them deliverance; but they understood not. 26 And the day following he appeared unto them as they strove, and would have set them at one again, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why do ye wrong one to another? 27 But he that did his neighbor wrong thrust him away, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Wouldest thou kill me, as thou killedst the Egyptian yesterday? 29 And Moses fled at this saying, and became a sojourner in the land of Midian, where he begat two sons. 30 And when forty years were fulfilled, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. 31 And when Moses saw it, he wondered at the sight: and as he drew near to behold, there came a voice of the Lord, 32 I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. And Moses trembled, and durst not behold. 33 And the Lord said unto him, Loose the shoes from thy feet: for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. 34 I have surely seen the affliction of my people that is in Egypt, and have heard their groaning, and I am come down to deliver

them: and now come, I will send thee into Egypt. 35 This Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? him hath God sent to be both a ruler and a deliverer with the hand of the angel that appeared to him in the bush. 36 This man led them forth, having wrought wonders and signs in Egypt, and in the Red sea, and in the wilderness forty years. 37 This is that Moses, who said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me. 38 This is he that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel that spake to him in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers: who received living oracles to give unto us: 39 to whom our fathers would not be obedient, but thrust him from them, and turned back in their hearts unto Egypt, 40 saying unto Aaron, Make us gods that shall go before us: for as for this Moses, who led us forth out of the land of Egypt, we know not what is become of him. 41 And they made a calf in those days, and brought a sacrifice unto the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their hands. 42 But God turned, and gave them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets,

Did ye offer unto me slain beasts and sacrifices
Forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?

43 And ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch,
And the star of the god Rephan,
The figures which ye made to worship them:
And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

Moses, the great law-giver himself, was in Egypt, not in Canaan, and God was with him there. It was, moreover, in the land of Midian, not Canaan, that God appeared to him in the burning bush and called him to deliver Israel (vv. 29, 30). This made even Midian "holy ground" (v. 33). Consequently the Temple is not the only holy place. God appeared in the wilderness, when

He gave "living oracles" (the divine revelation of the Ten Commandments) to Moses on Mount Sinai. This too was not in Canaan. In this utterance Stephen also proves his regard for the Law, against the accusations which had been made against him.

When Israel turned away from God, He gave even His chosen people up to the worship of idols (v. 42). Consequently the Israelites are not the pets or favorites of God, regardless of their conduct and their relation to Him. And it was God himself who carried them away as captives to the heathen land of Babylon.

Unto Egypt (v. 39). That is, unto the bull-worship of Egypt (Ex. 32. 1).

The host of heaven (v. 42). The stars.

The book of the prophets. The Minor Prophets, which formed one roll or book.

Did ye offer (vv. 42, 43). Am. 5. 25–27. Stephens is quoting the passage from the Greek translation of the Old Testament and adapts the verses, in the manner of the rabbis, to later events.

Moloch, Rephan (v. 43). Names of idols.

IV. SOLOMON. 7. 44–50.

44 Our fathers had the tabernacle of the testimony in the wilderness, even as he appointed who spake unto Moses, that he should make it according to the figure that he had seen. 45 Which also our fathers, in their turn, brought in with Joshua when they entered on the possession of the nations, that God thrust out before the face of our fathers, unto the days of David; 46 who found favor in the sight of God, and asked to find a habitation for the God of Jacob. 47 But Solomon built him

a house. 48 Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in houses
made with hands; as saith the prophet,
49 The heaven is my throne,
And the earth the footstool of my feet:
What manner of house will ye build me? saith the Lord.
Or what is the place of my rest?
50 Did not my hand make all these things?

The tabernacle, the original temple and house of God, was not in Jerusalem, but "in the wilderness," that is, in a foreign and heathen land (v. 44).

Testimony. This refers to the two tablets of stone on which the Ten Commandments were written and which were kept in the Ark in the Holy of holies (Heb. 9. 3, 4). The word "testimony" used in the Old Testament is here literally "meetings." The tabernacle was the tent where God met His people. Consequently God was as much there in the wilderness as ever in Jerusalem. His presence is not limited to one place. In Palestine itself the tabernacle was erected in several places besides Jerusalem.

When Solomon built the Temple, which took the place of the tabernacle, he even said in his dedicatory prayer that God is not confined to any house "made with hands" (v. 48). See 1 K. 8. 27. God does not prefer one place to another. Compare Jn. 4. 21; Acts 17. 24.

The Most High (v. 48). The name of God used by the Gentiles also (Dan. 3. 26; Acts 16. 17).

Verses 49 and 50 are a quotation from Is. 66. 1, 2.

Throughout this part of the address we observe indirect references to Christ. In the mind of Stephen these Old Testament characters are prophetic of Christ. He is the

background and center of the scene. In v. 37 we even get a glimpse, so to speak, of His face. Compare 3. 22. There are also veiled intimations throughout that Stephen's judges were guilty of the same sins as the Israelites of old. Note carefully vv. 9, 25, 27, 35, 39. All this was a direct challenge to the Sanhedrin, and their looks must have betrayed a burning hatred against Stephen, especially as he held them in the grip of the very Scriptures which they professed to believe and obey. This attitude rouses Stephen to dare all consequences and once for all tell these men the plain truth about themselves.

This he does in the closing words.

V. CONCLUSION. 7. 51–53.

51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Spirit: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? and they killed them that showed before of the coming of the Righteous One; of whom ye have now become betrayers and murderers; 53 ye who received the law as it was ordained by angels, and kept it not.

These final words are those of what we might call "a strict preacher."

Stiffnecked and uncircumcised (v. 51). Old Testament language. See Dt. 10. 16; Jer. 6. 10.

As your fathers did. See 2 Chr. 36. 16; Mt. 23. 37.

The Righteous One (v. 52). Jesus (3. 14; 22. 14; 1 Jn. 2. 1). "He fulfilled the Law, and you have broken the Law by murdering the Innocent One."

Ordained by angels (v. 53). That is, from God, by angels, through Moses, to the people of Israel (Gal. 3. 19; Heb. 2. 2).

Such a rebuke by an obscure man was of course simply unpardonable and lashed the judges into insane fury. Compare Jn. 9. 34. By accusing the very guardians of the Law of being guilty of disobeying the Law made Stephen absolutely and finally impossible.

c. Stephen's Martyrdom. 7. 54–60.

54 Now when they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57 But they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and rushed upon him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. 60 And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

Looked up stedfastly into heaven (v. 55). He lifts his eyes to the source of all grace, that he may receive strength to endure unto the end. The prayer of his heart must have been Ps. 121. 1.

The glory of God. The name of the Shekinah, the pillar of cloud and fire, defined by the Jews as a concen-

tration of God's omnipresence. Compare Is. 6. 3 and Jn. 12. 41.

Jesus standing. To welcome his faithful servant who, like Himself, "suffered without the gate" (Heb. 13. 12).

Son of Man (v. 56). The only instance where this title is applied to Jesus by a believer. Compare Mt. 26. 64; Jn. 1. 51.

Rushed upon him (v. 57). Goaded into desperation by what they pretended to be blasphemy, but what they knew to be the truth, these dignitaries fling all sanity to the winds and become a raging mob. They did not pause to pronounce legal judgment. And they forgot that they had no authority to inflict capital punishment. This right the Roman government had taken from them (Jn. 18. 31). The stoning of Stephen was therefore the mob violence of a "lynching party."

The witnesses (v. 58). According to Mosaic legislation the accusers were required to cast the first stones at the offender (Dt. 17. 7). To ply this task unhampered by their loose Oriental garments, these were first laid aside.

A young man named Saul. Our introduction to the future apostle Paul. He watched the garments of the executioners and gave his consent to Stephen's death (8. 1; 22. 20). But the bloody scene was not easily forgotten. Especially the words of the martyr. It proved to be the first prick of the goad against which he found it hard to kick (26. 14). "Young" means a man between thirty and forty years of age.

Lord Jesus, receive my spirit (v. 59). The first of the two prayers which closed his earthly career. And the prayer was heard. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved" (Mt. 10. 22). Compare Mt. 5. 10–12.

Lay not this sin to their charge (v. 60). The closing prayer of Stephen which reëchoed the prayer of his Saviour on the cross (Lk 23. 34). This was Stephen's "revenge." A prayer truly in the Spirit of Jesus.

He fell asleep. Stephen is the Abel of the New Testament (Gen. 4. 8), the first of the innumerable multitude of witnesses whose blood became the seed of the Church. There was no invisible question mark on the plate "At Rest" on Stephen's casket, so to speak. To Christ and the Christian death is only a sleep out of which He who is the Resurrection and the Life shall awaken His slumbering saints to behold His glory. Compare Jn. 11. 11, 25; Rev. 22. 4. The name Stephen means "crown." Compare Rev. 2. 10; 3. 21.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them" (Rev. 14. 13).

II. IN PALESTINE AND SYRIA. 8. 1—12. 25.

1. Persecution. 8. 1–4.

1 And Saul was consenting unto his death.

And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men buried Stephen, and made great lamentation over him. 3 But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison.

4 They therefore that were scattered abroad went about preaching the word.

Hitherto the Church had been "the church which was in Jerusalem" (v. 1). Now the time had arrived for the *second* step in the plan as outlined by the Lord Jesus in the key-verse 1. 8, "Ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, *and in all Judæa and Samaria.*" This was accomplished by the first general persecution of which the martyrdom of Stephen marked the beginning. Accordingly we read that "they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of *Judæa and Samaria*" (v. 1).

Chapters 8—12 cover a period of about seven years, from 37 to 44 A.D.

Except the apostles (v. 1). No doubt because, as leaders of the flock, they refused to desert their post in the time of danger. Perhaps too they lingered in the hope of bringing about the conversion of Jerusalem. The reason why they were not even arrested this time may have been that it was the Greek-speaking Jews who bore

the brunt of the attack. Back of these reasons is of course the providence of God. As in the case of the Lord, their "hour was not yet come" (Lk. 7. 30).

Devout men buried Stephen (v. 2). In the confusion he lacked Christian burial, but pious Jews who recognized his holiness and the monstrous injustice of his murder interred his body in Jewish manner "with great lamentation."

Saul laid waste the church (v. 3). He was the leading spirit in the persecution. Compare his own remorseful testimony in 22. 4, 19; 26. 10, 11; 1 Cor. 15. 9; Gal. 1. 13; 1 Tim. 1. 13. Compare also 9. 1, 13, 21.

2. In Samaria. 8. 5–24.

a. Philip. 8. 5–8.

5 And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and pro-
claimed unto them the Christ. 6 And the multitudes gave heed
with one accord unto the things that were spoken by Philip,
when they heard, and saw the signs which he did. 7 For from
many of those that had unclean spirits, they came out, crying
with a loud voice: and many that were palsied, and that were
lame, were healed. 8 And there was much joy in that city.

Preaching the word (v. 5). The manner in which the scattered believers made use of their new opportunity to bear testimony to Christ. "Preaching" means "telling the good news." We see that it was not only the apostles who thus "preached." It is a privilege which each Christian enjoys, a duty incumbent on all believers in the Lord Jesus.

Philip. One of these witnesses was Philip. Not the apostle, but one of the Seven (6. 5). In 21. 8 he is called "the evangelist."

The city of Samaria. In the province of the same name, immediately north of Judæa. It is to be remembered that the Jews considered the Samaritans almost as idolaters on account of their mixed heathen origin (Jn. 4. 9). It was therefore a most radical departure when Jews preached the gospel to Samaritans. It was the breaking down of old partitions.

The multitudes gave heed (v. 6). The soil had been prepared and seed sown by Jesus (Jn. 4. 39–42), and Philip now experienced the truth of what Jesus had said, "One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not labored: others have labored, and ye are entered into their labor" (Jn. 4. 37, 38).

Had unclean spirits (v. 7). Were possessed by demons.

b. Simon Magus. 8. 9–13.

9 But there was a certain man, Simon by name, who before-
time in the city used sorcery, and amazed the people of
Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: 10 to
whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying,
This man is that power of God which is called Great. 11 And
they gave heed to him, because that of long time he had amazed
them with his sorceries. 12 But when they believed Philip
preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the
name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.
13 And Simon also himself believed: and being baptized, he
continued with Philip; and beholding signs and great miracles
wrought, he was amazed.

Used sorcery (v. 9). Practised magic and the black arts. Compare 1 Tim. 4. 1.

Amazed. Occurs three times in this paragraph (vv. 9, 11, 13).

Some great one. Perhaps pretended to be the Messiah.

The power of God (v. 10). The chief of the several emanations, or Powers, which Simon taught proceeded from God.

Simon believed (v. 13). Simon's faith appears to have been only intellectual persuasion, or the assent of sudden amazement.

c. Peter and John. 8. 14–17.

14 Now when the apostles that were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15 who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit: 16 for as yet it was fallen upon none of them: only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of Jesus paved the way for Philip and gave his preaching such success that the apostles in Jerusalem sent two of their own number to assist him in the great ingathering of souls.

Prayed for them (v. 15). The Samaritan converts had received Christian baptism, but it had not as yet been accompanied by the usual manifestations of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Spirit did not depend on the office of apostleship (9. 17), nor did it depend on the laying on

of hands (10. 44). In the case of Cornelius it even preceded baptism. But in the present instance baptism came first and the gift of the Holy Spirit was delayed. It was now conferred by the apostolic imposition of hands in answer to their prayer. Compare Heb. 6. 2.

Samaria (v. 14). The earlier command of Jesus to the apostles not to enter any city of the Samaritans (Mt. 10. 5) had now been revoked.

d. Simony. 8. 18–25.

18 Now when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, 19 saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay my hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit. 20 But Peter said unto him, Thy silver perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money. 21 Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right before God. 22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee. 23 For I see that thou art in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. 24 And Simon answered and said, Pray ye for me to the Lord, that none of the things which ye have spoken come upon me.

25 They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel to many villages of the Samaritans.

Offered them money (v. 18). He ascribed his own motives to them and thought that they might be willing to sell the secret of what he supposed was a new conjurer's trick. It revealed the hidden hypocrisy of his unregenerate heart. His brazen effrontery met with a deserved rebuke.

Thy silver perish with thee (v. 20). Literally, "Your money be with you unto perdition," or, "Go to destruction with your money." Peter uses such strong language because he sees that this sin would be "gall of bitterness" and a "bond of iniquity" in the Church, if it was not immediately stamped out. Compare the sin of Ananias and Sapphira (5. 1–11, and notes). Perhaps Peter also saw that there was little hope of Simon's repentance unless the sin and its consequences were set before him in all their horror. Observe that Peter's terrible denunciation is qualified by an invitation to repentance and exhortation to prayer for forgiveness (v. 22).

Gall of bitterness (v. 23). Old Testament language "poison of idolatry" (Dt. 29. 18). Compare Heb. 12. 15. "Bond of iniquity" means "chain of wickedness," a wrong that imprisons and enslaves.

Pray ye for me (v. 24). Simon does not pray for himself, as Peter had advised him to do. Nor does he utter any word of sorrow for his sin. He only asks for intercession that he may not suffer merited punishment. Compare the repeated petitions of Pharaoh to Moses (Ex. 7. 8, 28; 9. 28; 10. 17).

This is the first instance of an abuse which played such havoc with the Mediæval Church. "Simony" means buying and selling of sacred offices, a kind of church graft. It has its name from this very Simon and his sin.

Preached to many villages (v. 25). On their way back to Jerusalem.

The Ethiopian Eunuch. 8. 26–40.

26 But an angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza: the same is desert. 27 And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship; 28 and he was returning and sitting in his chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. 29 And the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30 And Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some one shall guide me? And he besought Philip to come up and sit with him. 32 Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this,

He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;
And as a lamb before his shearer is dumb,
So he openeth not his mouth:

33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away:
His generation who shall declare?
For his life is taken from the earth.

34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other? 35 And Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture, preached unto him Jesus. 36 And as they went on the way, they came unto a certain water; and the eunuch saith, Behold, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, for he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached the gospel to all the cities, till he came to Cæsarea.

Toward the south (v. 26). Gaza was a city of Philistia, southwest of Judæa, and therefore south of Samaria, where Philip was.

The same is desert. The inland city of Gaza had been deserted for a new Gaza built on the coast 96 B.C. The old city was therefore called Desert. The road leading through its ruins was also called Desert.

Ethiopia (v. 27). A country in Africa, south of Egypt. The direct road to Egypt ran through old Gaza.

Candace. The dynastic name of a succession of queens ruling in Ethiopia. The eunuch was the State Treasurer of the reigning queen. There is little doubt that his skin was black. The circumstance that he "hade come to Jerusalem to worship" indicates that he was a proselyte. But though, like Cornelius, he believed in God, prayed to Him, and obeyed His commandments, he was not a Christian.

Reading the prophet Isaiah (v. 28). The devout man made use of the abundant time of the long journey by reading aloud from a roll containing the single book of Isaiah. The lonely eunuch yearned for guidance in his search for the truth, and God had a witness ready to help the seeker "in time of need."

Understandest thou what thou readest? (v. 30). The quite informal greeting was somewhat in the form of a pleasantry. In the language used by the two men the question ran: "Ginoskeis ha anaginoskeis?" The equally informal and ready reply immediately led to the most friendly relations. But there was no inclination to allow

these exchanges to divert the attention of either from the matter of chief interest to both.

The passage of the scripture (v. 32). The precious fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. The eunuch was puzzled as to the identity of the one described in verses 7 and 8. Philip at once explains to him that it is a prophecy speaking of Jesus. This explanation, by the way, should suffice also for some of our learned modern doubters of this passage.

In his humiliation (v. 33). "He was taken away by a humiliating judgment. Who shall describe His contemporaries (who treated Him in this shameful fashion)?"

Behold, water! (v. 36). As they were traveling along the coast of the Mediterranean it is very likely that the eunuch pointed to its waters. In the early Church baptism was administered in three forms: immersion (dipping), ablution (pouring), and aspersion (sprinkling).

Verse 37 is wanting, as it does not occur in the oldest manuscripts and translations of the New Testament.

He baptized him (v. 38). The eunuch's conversion fulfilled the promise of God in Ps. 68. 31.

Caught away Philip (v. 39). He must have traveled many miles in the company of the eunuch to give him such thorough instruction as to cause the latter to request baptism. The exceptional language of this verse and the next implies that it was by supernatural agency that Philip was "caught away" and "was found at Azotus." Compare 1 K. 18. 12. They were traveling southwest from Gaza, and Azotus (Ashdod) is twenty miles north of Gaza. God is able even to suspend time and annihilate space, as

easily as He can open prison doors, when it serves the purposes of salvation. From Azotus Philip traveled northward along the coast, "preaching the gospel to all the cities." These cities were Jamnia, Lydda, Joppa, Antipatris, and Cæsarea. See Bible map. This journey of Philip may explain why we find Christians in the last named cities in 9. 32, 36; 18. 22.

Cæsarea (v. 40). Built 12 B.C. and named for Augustus Cæsar. It was the seat of government and the residence of the Roman governor of Palestine.

Note again carefully: the seeking soul; the Word of God; the divinely appointed preacher; the heart of the sermon, "Jesus"; the newborn faith; the seal of holy baptism; and the believer "going on his way rejoicing."

4. Saul's Conversion. 9. 1–31.

a. The Vision. 9. 1–9.

1 But Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against
the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, 2 and asked
of him letters to Damascus unto the synagogues, that if he
found any that were of the Way, whether men or women, he
might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 And as he journeyed,
it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus: and suddenly
there shone round about him a light out of heaven: 4 and he
fell upon the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul,
Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou,
Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: 6 but
rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou
must do. 7 And the man that journeyed with him stood speech-
less, hearing the voice, but beholding no man. 8 And Saul arose
from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw

nothing; and they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

Damascus (v. 2). The ancient capital of Syria and supposed to be the oldest city in the world. Abraham passed through it some 2500 years B.C. (Gen. 14. 15). To-day it has a population of 250,000.

Letters. Papers of "authority and commission" (26. 10–12).

The synagogues. The few Christians in Damascus were still members of the Jewish synagogues.

The Way. A beautiful and most fitting name for the Christian faith and manner of life. "To be of the Way" was equal to saying, "to be a Christian." The expression is used frequently in Acts: 16. 17; 18. 25, 26; 19. 9, 23; 22. 4; 24. 14, 22. The phrase also keeps the goal of our pilgrimage in view.

Bound. As prisoners in chains, for trial and punishment by the Sanhedrin.

A light out of heaven (v. 3). In this light Saul saw the risen and glorified Jesus (1 Cor. 15. 8). Compare the three accounts of this vision (22. 6–16; 26. 12–18). From these it appears that all of the company saw the light, fell to the ground, and heard a sound, but only Saul beheld the speaker, recognized the sound as a voice, and understood the words. Compare the corresponding manner in which the multitude heard the voice from heaven in Jn. 12. 28–30. Compare also the revelation of the glorified Son of Man to John (Rev. 1. 16).

Saul, Saul (v. 4). The repetition of aggrieved surprise and reproach. Compare Lk. 10. 41; 13. 34; 22. 31.

Why persecutest thou me? To persecute Christians is to persecute the Christ in them. "Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even the least, ye did it unto me," whether good or evil (Mt. 25. 40).

Led him by the hand (v. 8). What a different entry from what Saul had thought when he started out from Jerusalem!

Without sight (v. 9). Blind and fasting for three days and nights. It must have been a period of the intense darkness just before the dawn. All the stricken man was able to do was to *pray*. During these days it was revealed to him that Ananias would come (v. 12). See 22. 12.

b. Saul's Baptism. 9. 10–19.

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and the Lord said unto him in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. 11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one named Saul, a man of Tarsus: for behold, he prayeth; 12 and he hath seen a man named Ananias coming in, and laying his hands on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 But Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard from many of this man, how much evil he did to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call upon thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 for I will show him how many things

he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias departed, and entered into the house; and laying his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, who appeared unto thee in the way which thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mayest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit. 18 And straightway there fell from his eyes as it were scales, and he received his sight; and he arose and was baptized; 19 and he took food and was strengthened.

And he was certain days with the disciples that were at Damascus.

The street which is called Straight (v. 11). That is, Straight Street. This street still runs through the city.

For behold, he prayeth. Jesus knows in heaven when a penitent prays on earth and makes provision for the answer. "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Lk. 15. 10).

Go thy way (v. 15). Ananias hesitates. The report of the persecution headed by Saul had already reached the Christians in Damascus. But he receives the assurance necessary to make him obey.

A chosen vessel. An elected and appointed instrument in the hands of Christ.

To bear my name. To preach Christ.

Gentiles. Mentioned first. Saul was chosen to be "an apostle to the Gentiles" (Rom. 11. 13; 15. 16). Compare Acts 13. 46; 18. 6; 22. 21; 26. 17, 18; Gal. 1. 15, 16; 2. 9; Eph. 3. 8.

Must suffer (v. 16). Instead of inflicting suffering on others, as heretofore (vv. 1–3), Saul was now to endure suffering. Instead of being a persecutor he was to be persecuted. Instead of adding to the weight of the

cross borne by the followers of Jesus, he was to bear the heaviest cross of all. He was called to share in the sufferings of Jesus, to the glory of that precious name (2 Cor. 11. 23; Phil. 1. 29; 3. 10; Col. 1. 24).

Brother Saul (v. 17). What a greeting by this humble disciple to the humbled persecutor! And Saul did not forget it (22. 13). It had lodged in his broken heart.

Receive thy sight. Compare v. 12. It was far more than physical sight that Saul received. He received the sight of faith, the assurance of forgiveness, the gift and illumination of the Holy Spirit. The means and seal of this was the Word of God in holy Baptism. By this sacrament he was received into communion with the Saviour and the Church he had been persecuting.

The conversion of Soul is "one of the greatest decisive events in the history of Christianity. He was the first Christian to say, in his heart, 'My mission field is the world.' He struck the *universal* note in his preaching of the gospel." From this moment all his great spiritual power and exceptional gifts were dedicated to this cause. The spirit of this new convert appears in such passages as Phil. 3. 1–16 and 1 Tim. 1. 12–17. It is the Spirit of Jesus, to whom he gives such adoration in Gal. 2. 20, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me."

c. Saul Preaches Christ. 9. 20–22.

20 And straightway in the synagogues he proclaimed Jesus, that he is the Son of God. 21 And all that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them that called on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests. 22 But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ.

It was at this time, immediately following his conversion, that Paul "went away into Arabia" (Gal. 1. 17).

He proclaimed Jesus (v. 20). Compare vv. 1, 2. No wonder that the Damascenes "were amazed." Compare Gal. 2. 23, 24.

This (v. 22). This man Jesus.

The Christ. The expected Messiah, promised in the Old Testament and looked for by the Jews. But He is also "the son of God" (v. 20), not a political deliverer and king, but the divine manifestation of God and the Saviour of the world.

d. Saul's Escape from Damascus. 9. 23–25.

23 And when many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him: 24 but their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates also day and night that they might kill him: 25 but his disciples took him by night, and let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket.

Many days (v. 23). Three years (Gal. 1. 18).

To kill him. Because in the opinion of the Jews he was a dangerous heretic and must be silenced. Compare

the same attitude toward Jesus (Jn. 11. 49, 50; 12. 10, 11). They persuaded "the governor under Aretas the king" to guard the walls of the city in order to prevent his escape (2 Cor. 11. 32, 33).

Through the wall (v. 26). Through a window of one of the houses built on top of the city wall and thus forming a part of it (2 Cor. 11. 33). Compare the escape of the twelve spies (Josh. 2. 15) and of David (1 Sam. 19. 18).

In a basket. A large basket of the kind used for carrying goods overland, strapped to the sides of a camel.

e. In Jerusalem. 9. 26–31.

26 And when he was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: and they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how at Damascus he had preached boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 And he was with them going in and going out at Jerusalem, 29 preaching boldly in the name of the Lord: and he spake and disputed against the Grecian Jews; but they were seeking to kill him. 30 And when the brethren knew it, they brought him down to Cæsarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

31 So the church throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied.

To Jerusalem (v. 26). See Gal. 1. 18, 19.

All afraid of him. Shortly before this he was a distinguished Pharisee in Jerusalem, a highly honored leader

among the Jews, enjoying their respect and having a most brilliant future. Now he was despised and hated by his former associates and shunned by the Christians. The latter feared that he was a spy, harboring further evil designs against them.

Barnabas took him (v. 27). See 4. 36, 37. This one man believed in him, befriended him, and introduced him to the apostles. According to Gal. 1. 19 "the apostles" were represented at this time by Peter and James.

Down to Cæsarea (v. 30). From the high mountainous district of Jerusalem to the coast.

Tarsus. His native city in Cilicia of Asia Minor (Gal. 1. 21). Tarsus was exceeded as a seat of learning only by Athens and Alexandria, and there is little doubt that Saul had been a student at its famous university. The modern name of the city is Tarasto. The reason why Saul was willing to leave Jerusalem was the vision in the Temple, recorded in 22. 17–21.

Had peace (v. 31). The conversion of Saul ended the persecution. The attention of the Jews was also diverted by the attempt of the emperor Caligula to have his statue erected in the Temple. In consequence the Church was enjoying a season of spiritual refreshing. Observe that as a result of the persecution the gospel had now spread "throughout all Judæa and Galilee and Samaria," according to the instructions of Jesus in the key-verse 1. 8.

5. Æneas. 9. 32–35.

32 And it came to pass, as Peter went throughout all parts, he came down also to the saints that dwelt at Lydda. 33 And there he found a certain man named Æneas, who had kept his bed eight years; for he was palsied. 34 And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee: arise, and make thy bed. And straightway he arose. 35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and in Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

Once more Peter occupies the foreground, and he is the chief character to the end of chapter 12. During the events recorded in 6. 1—9. 21 he retreats into the background, appearing only once in 8. 14–25, while Saul, the future apostle Paul, is introduced, who in turn disappears, except for a brief mention in 11. 30, till he occupies the scene as the leading personage from chapter 13 to the end.

At Lydda (v. 32). Se notes on 8. 39. For the location of the cities mentioned in this chapter, consult Bible maps.

Saints. A designation of the Christians, not because they were so holy in themselves, but because they had been justified (accounted righteous) by God through their faith in Christ, and because they were being sanctified by the Holy Spirit received from God and dwelling in their hearts.

Palsied (v. 33). Paralyzed.

Jesus Christ healeth thee (v. 34). Not Peter, but Jesus Christ. Compare Mk. 2. 3–12; Jn. 5. 5–9.

Sharon (v. 35). The plain in which Lydda was located.

6. Dorcas. 9. 36–43.

36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did. 37 And it came to pass in those days, that she fell sick, and died: and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber. 38 And as Lydda was nigh unto Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men unto him, entreating him, Delay not to come on unto us. 39 And Peter arose and went with them. And when he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them. 40 But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning to the body, he said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up. 41 And he gave her his hand, and raised her up; and calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. 42 And it became known throughout all Joppa: and many believed on the Lord. 43 And it came to pass, that he abode many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

Joppa (v. 36). The single seaport of Judæa.

Tabitha. The Hebrew word for the Greek "Dorcas," meaning "gazelle."

Almsdeeds. The nature of these is indicated by "the coats and garments which Dorcas had made" for the poor (v. 39). This was her beautiful womanly way of serving the Lord.

Nigh unto Joppa (v. 38). Ten miles away.

Put them all forth (v. 40). Peter wished to be alone with the Lord as he prayed.

Turning to the body. He had received assurance in the spirit that his prayer was heard and that the resurrection

of Dorcas was according to the will of the Lord. Peter could therefore proceed in the faith that does not doubt and which may therefore plead the promises of Christ (Mt. 21. 21, 22). Compare Mk. 5. 40–42.

Widows (v. 41). Their mention here points to a developed organization, as in the mother church (6. 1). These widows formed a recognized body and their names were entered on a roll. Paul devotes half a chapter to their organization in 1 Tim. 5. 1–16. In return for their support they devoted themselves to various kinds of feminine service under the direction of the leaders of the church.

Luke selects these two incidents in the life of Peter for record here to show how the apostle was gradually prepared by the Lord to lay aside his Jewish prejudices and become willing to share the gospel message with the Gentiles. He had been in Samaria and returned to Jerusalem (8. 14–25). Now he was led a second time from Jerusalem, this time northwest to Lydda, to Joppa, and finally to Cæsarea, where he was to be instrumental in winning the first Gentile convert to the Christian faith. The circumstance that "he abode many days with one Simon a tanner" (v. 43) points in the same direction, as the Jews looked on tanning as a disreputable trade. This was because a tanner handled the skins of "unclean" animals. A wife could even secure a divorce if her husband became a tanner. This step on the part of Peter shows that he was already disregarding his earlier prejudices and prepares us for the next step in the following chapter.

7. Cornelius. 10. 1–48.

a. The Angel. 10. 1–8.

1 Now there was a certain man in Cæsarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, 2 a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. 3 He saw in a vision openly, as it were about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in unto him, and saying to him, Cornelius. 4 And he, fastening his eyes upon him, and being affrighted, said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are gone up for a memorial before God. 5 And now send men to Joppa, and fetch one Simon, who is surnamed Peter: 6 he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side. 7 And when the angel that spake unto him was departed, he called two of his household-servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually; 8 and having rehearsed all things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

Centurion (v. 1). Captain of a hundred soldiers (Mt. 8. 5; Lk. 23. 47).

The band called the Italian band. A company of soldiers from Italy, stationed as guard at Cæsarea.

A devout man (v. 2). A believer in the one true God, but not a circumcised proselyte. He observed the recognized religious duty of charity and kept the three stated hours of prayer (v. 30), but he was not as yet a Christian. Religion and Christianity are two different things.

The ninth hour (v. 3). See note on 3. 1. Compare Lk. 1. 10–12; Acts 27. 23, 24.

Lord (v. 4). Same as "sir."

For a memorial. God had seen his almsdeeds and heard his prayers and was keeping them in mind, not as meritorious in His sight, but as fruits of the repentance which leads to faith.

Household-servants (v. 7). Domestic slaves.

b. Peter's Vision. 10. 9–16.

9 Now on the morrow, as they were on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour: 10 and he became hungry, and desired to eat: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance; 11 and he beholdeth the heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet, let down by four corners upon the earth: 12 wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heaven. 13 And there came a voice to him, Rise Peter; kill and eat. 14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean. 15 And a voice came unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common. 16 And this was done thrice: and straightway the vessel was received up into heaven.

The housetop (v. 9). The flat roofs of Oriental houses were used as a retreat for devotion. They were reached by an outside staircase (Mt. 24. 17).

The sixth hour. Noon, the second hour of prayer. See note on 3. 1.

A trance (v. 10). A state in which the soul seems to rise above the body and behold visions of spiritual realities, presented in the form of symbolic images. The outer form of Peter's vision may have been determined by the skins he had seen in Simon's tannery. Compare 22. 17, 18; 2 Cor. 12. 2–4; Rev. 1. 10.

A great sheet (v. 11). Its contents represented all the different nations of the earth.

Common and unclean (v. 14). Unholy and impure. The sheet contained all manner of animals; therefore some which a Jew considered unlawful as an article of food (11. 6; Lev. 11). Peter therefore refuses to obey. Once again he contradicts his Lord (Mt. 26. 35; Jn. 13. 8). He seems to have forgotten the words of his Master in Mk. 7. 14–23 and Mt. 28. 19, 20. Or perhaps once more he spoke "not knowing what he said," as on the Mount of Transfiguration (Lk. 9. 33). Or it may be that he did not recognize the speaker, who is not named. "Lord" may be translated "sir," as in v. 4.

What God hath cleansed (v. 15). Compare Rom. 14. 14. God had chosen all the races of mankind to hear the gospel. None were to be excluded from salvation by faith in Christ.

Thrice (v. 16). For emphasis.

c. The Three Messengers. 10. 17–23.

17 Now while Peter was much perplexed in himself what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men that were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood before the gate, 18 and called and asked whether Simon, who was surnamed Peter, were lodging there. 19 And while Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three man seek thee. 20 But arise, and get thee down, and go with them, nothing doubting: for I have sent them. 21 And Peter went down to the men, and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come? 22 And

they said, Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous man and one that feareth God, and well reported of by all the nation of the Jews, was warned of God by a holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words from thee. 23 So he called them in and lodged them.

Much perplexed (v. 17). Peter was not able to grasp as yet what he had seen. Perhaps he remembered the story of the prophet Jonah, who fled from this same port of Joppa to escape preaching to the Gentiles of Nineveh (Jon. 1. 3). The voice of the Spirit (vv. 19, 20) served to clear his mind, and by the following day Peter understood (v. 28).

Well reported of (v. 22). Of good reputation. Compare Lk. 7. 4, 5.

Hear words from thee. Compare 11. 14. God did not employ the angel to preach the gospel. It was His will that a sinful mortal saved by grace should share "the good news" with Cornelius. It is still His good pleasure to proclaim "by sinners to sinners the salvation of sinners."

Lodged them (v. 23). Still another step toward laying aside his Jewish scruples against Gentiles. Compare note on 9. 43.

d. Peter's Reception. 10. 23–33.

And on the morrow he arose and went forth with them, and certain of the brethren from Joppa accompanied him. 24 And on the morrow they entered into Cæsarea. And Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his kinsmen and his near friends. 25 And when it came to pass that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. 26 But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself

also am a man. 27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and findeth many together: 28 and he said unto them, Ye yourselves know how it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to join himself or come unto one of another nation; and yet unto me hath God showed that I should not call any man common or unclean: 29 wherefore also I came without gainsaying, when I was sent for. I ask therefore with what intent ye sent for me. 30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago, until this hour, I was keeping the ninth hour of prayer in my house; and behold, a man stood before me in bright apparel, 31 and saith, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call unto thee Simon, who is surnamed Peter; he lodgeth in the house of Simon a tanner, by the sea side. 33 Forthwith therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord.

On the morrow (v. 23). The second day after Peter had been prepared, and the third day after Cornelius had been prepared for their meeting. The distance from Joppa to Cæsarea is about forty miles. As they traveled afoot, they evidently lost no time. "The king's business required haste" (1 Sam. 21. 8). They arrived in Cæsarea at 3 o'clock on the fourth day following Cornelius' vision (vv. 24, 30).

Certain of the brethren. Jewish Christians, six in number (11. 12). Peter took with him so many because he realized the importance of the mission and the need of having an adequate number of witnesses to such a radical departure from the practice followed hitherto. The sequel proves that it was a judicious policy (11. 2, 3). Mean-

while, for similar reasons, Cornelius had invited "his kinsmen and his near friends" (v. 24), "with all his house" (v. 2).

Peter entered (v. 25). The courtyard.—*Went in* (v. 27). Into the house proper.

I myself am also a man (v. 26). Compare Mt. 8. 9; Rev. 22. 8, 9.

An unlawful thing (v. 28). See 11. 3; Gal. 2. 12.

Not call any man common or unclean. Hitherto the Christian Church had consisted exclusively of converts among Jews and circumcised proselytes. From now on converts from among the uncircumcised *Gentiles* were to be included (Eph. 2. 11–19). The missionary work among the half-heathen population of Samaria was a step in this direction, but as they practiced circumcision and observed the laws of Moses in part, they were still considered as half-Jews and not "of the Gentiles."

e. Peter's Sermon. 10. 34–43.

34 And Peter opened his mouth, and said,

Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him. 36 The word which he sent unto the children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)—37 that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judæa, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; 38 even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country

of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. 40 Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, 41 not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. 42 And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. 43 To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.

No respecter of persons (v. 34). God does not prefer one person to another on account of nationality, social condition, age, or sex. See Rom. 2. 10, 11.

Acceptable to him (v. 35). Not *saved* because he "fears God and does what is right," but acceptable with God for salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. That is, God receives penitents "in every nation."

God was with him (v. 38). And *in* Him (Jn. 14. 10).

Made manifest (v. 40). Visible, after His resurrection.

Him God raised up. Peter "preaches *Jesus,*" His death and resurrection (vv. 39, 40), and remission of sins by faith in Him (v. 43). This had been the substance of his preaching from the beginning (2. 22–36; 3. 13–26; 4. 10–12; 5. 30–32), as it was the substance of the preaching of Stephen (7. 52), of Philip (8. 35), and of Saul (9. 29).

To be the Judge (v. 42). See Jn. 5. 22, 27.

All the prophets (v. 43). Compare 3. 24; 26. 22; Is. 49. 6; Joel 2. 32; Rom. 10. 13.

Through his name. Through Him,—His person and power.

Believeth on him. Build their hope of salvation on Him as on a secure foundation.

Remission of sins. Not only forgiveness, but the "putting away" of sin and cleansing from all unrighteousness (1 Jn. 1. 7–9).

Here Peter's sermon was interrupted by God Himself. See 11. 15.

f. The Gentile Pentecost. 10. 44–48.

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision that believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Sprit. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid the water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

On all them that heard the word (v. 44). They believed the Good News and received the gift of the Holy Spirit. This was accompanied by a special manifestation of "speaking with tongues." See 19. 6. In 2. 4 we read, "with *other* tongues." Possibly, therefore, with a difference this time. See note on 2. 4.

Gentiles (v. 45). This word should receive the emphasis. The cause of the "amazement" of the Jewish companions was not the gift, but the fact that the objects of the gift were not Jews, as heretofore, but *heathens.*

Be baptized (v. 47). They had been "baptized in the Holy Spirit" by God Himself. Compare 1. 5 and 11. 16.

Peter accordingly urges that the baptism be completed with baptism in water. He does not conclude that the baptism of the Holy Spirit made baptism in water superfluous. God himself had indeed reversed the usual order, but it devolved on them to follow His special leading in this instance, keeping in mind the words of Jesus in Jn. 3. 5. Before Peter proceeds, however, he refers the matter to his six Jewish companions, who give their tacit consent.

In the name of Jesus Christ (v. 48). See note on 2. 38.

g. Peter's Defence. 11. 1–18.

1 Now the apostles and the brethren that were in Judæa heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. 2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him, 3 saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. 4 But Peter began, and expounded the matter unto them in order, saying, 5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, a certain vessel descending, as it were a great sheet let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even unto me: 6 upon which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw the fourfooted beasts of the earth and wild beasts and creeping things and birds of the heaven. 7 And I heard also a voice saying unto me, Rise, Peter; kill and eat. 8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath ever entered into my mouth. 9 But a voice answered the second time out of heaven, What God hath cleansed, make not thou common. 10 And this was done thrice: and all were drawn up again into heaven. 11 And behold, forthwith three men stood before the house in which we were, having been sent from Cæsarea unto me. 12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, making no dis-

tinction. And these six brethren also accompanied me; and we entered into the man's house: 13 and he told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, Send to Joppa, and fetch Simon, whose surname is Peter; 14 who shall speak unto thee words, whereby thou shalt be saved, thou and all thy house. 15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. 16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit. 17 If then God gave unto them the like gift as he did also unto us, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I, that I could withstand God? 18 And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life.

Peter's own experience made him aware that "they that were of the circumcision" (v. 2), the Christian Jews, would take exception to his procedure. See note on 10. 23. Their clannish spirit and national pride opposed the admission of uncircumcised Gentiles into Christian fellowship. Peter's chief offence in their eyes was that he had associated with his converts on equal terms. He had entertained Gentiles, and he had consented to be the guest of Gentiles. See 10. 23a and 48b. It was therefore no surprise to him when his conduct was challenged by his Jewish brethren. But by relating the events in detail he proves to them that it was not an arbitrary act on his part, but the clear guidance of the Lord, which left him without choice in the matter (v. 17).

At the beginning (v. 15). Pentecost.

The word of the Lord (v. 16). Acts 1. 5.

They held their peace (v. 18). Peter's opponents were open to conviction. All they needed was to see that it

was God's will. When this became clear to them they "glorified God" and gave vent to the wondering joy and praise of their hearts: "Then God has given even the *heathen* repentance unto eternal life!" (v. 18.)

8. The Church in Antioch. 11. 19–26.

19 They therefore that were scattered abroad upon the tribulation that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the word to none save only to Jews. 20 But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number that believed turned unto the Lord. 22 And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas as far as Antioch: 23 who, when he was come, and had seen the grace of God, was glad; and he exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord: 24 for he was a good man, and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord. 25 And he went forth to Tarsus to seek for Saul; 26 and when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that even for a whole year they were gathered together with the church, and taught much people; and that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

The tribulation that arose about Stephen (v. 19). See 8. 1, 4. Those who were "scattered abroad" by the persecution went to Samaria (8. 5), the coast towns along the Mediterranean (8. 26, 40; 9. 32, 36; 10. 1), Damascus (9. 19), and Galilee (9. 31). Here we find others

who had traveled "as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch."

Phoenicia was the country lying along the coast, north of Mount Carmel; *Cyprus* is the large island lying directly west of northern Phœnicia; and *Antioch* was the capital of Syria, north of Phœnicia. Antioch was the third largest city in the Roman empire (Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch), and numbered 400,000 inhabitants. As Jerusalem was the religious center of the Jewish Christians, so Antioch now became the religious center of the Gentile Christians. It was from Antioch that Paul began each of his three missionary journeys.

Save only the Jews. They did not know what was taking place in Cæsarea. But others, of larger vision, "spake unto the Greeks also, preaching the Lord Jesus" (v. 20). To this the Lord himself gave His approval (v. 21).

Cyrene (v. 20). A city of northern Africa.

Was glad (v. 23). Barnabas the Levite enjoyed the confidence of his Jewish brethren in Jerusalem and was sent as their trusted representative to pronounce upon the new movement in Antioch (v. 24). He too caught the larger vision and gave his approval to the policy. Possibly he had previously imbibed some of the broader views of his friend Saul. Very likely too he had been among those who had listened to the report of Peter (11. 1–17) and with them "glorified God" (11. 18).

Purpose. Single-minded intention and perseverance.

To seek for Saul (v. 25). Barnabas knew that Saul was the very man to assist him in this new work among the Gentiles.

Were called Christians (v. 26). Up to this time they had been called Galilæans and Nazarenes (24. 5). They called themselves "the brethren," "the disciples," "the faithful," "the saints."

It is probable that the new name was given them by the heathen in ridicule. It is a term of contempt on the lips of Agrippa (26. 28). But what had been a nickname soon came to be a title of honor (1 Pet. 4. 16). The word "Christian" is Greek, its termination is Latin, and its meaning is derived from the Hebrew "Messiah" (Anointed). Thus we may say that, like the inscription on the cross, it is "written in Hebrew and Greek and Latin" (Jn. 19. 20).

9. Agabus. 11. 27–30.

27 Now in these days there came down prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be a great famine over all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius. 29 And the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa: 30 which also they did, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Prophets (v. 27). Preachers. Their inspired utterances sometimes included the foretelling of future events.

Agabus (v. 28). See 21. 10, 11.

All the world. The civilized world of the Roman empire. See Lk. 2. 1.

In the days of Claudius. Claudius rules as emperor 41–54 A.D. The famine occurred in the fourth year of

his reign. This prophecy was made about two years earlier.

Determined to send relief (v. 29). The first instance of a public collection in one church for another, and it originates in the spontaneous liberality of *Gentile* Christians toward *Jewish* brethren.

In Judæa (v. 29). Because the persecution had impoverished those who lived there. Those who had the means to travel were gone, depriving those who remained of needed relief in the time of famine and distress.

Which also they did (v. 30). That is, later on, when the famine actually came.

Elders (v. 30). In Jerusalem. Older men, serving as "pastors" (1 Pet. 5: 1–4). They were also called "bishops," that is, supervisors or overseers (20. 17, 28). Church government was adopted from the practice in the Jewish synagogues and gradually adapted to the special needs of Christian congregations.

And Saul. It must have been a melancholy satisfaction for Saul to be one of the two elected to bring this relief to Jerusalem, inasmuch as he had taken a leading part in the persecution that had impoverished the Christians there and perhaps widowed many of the women (22. 4; 26. 10). Notice his eager readiness in Gal. 2. 10 to "remember the poor." All the rest of his life he continued to solicit contributions for the poor in Jerusalem (Rom. 15. 25, 26; 1 Cor. 16. 2–4; 2 Cor. 8. 1–4; Acts 24. 17).

10. Herod. 12. 1–24.

a. Peter in Prison. 12. 1–5.

1 Now about that time Herod the king put forth his hands to afflict certain of the church. 2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword. 3 And when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. And those were the days of unleavened bread. 4 And when he had taken him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him; intending after the Passover to bring him forth to the people. 5 Peter therefore was kept in the prison: but prayer was made earnestly of the church unto God for him.

Herod the king (v. 1). Herod Agrippa I, son of Aristobulus and grandson of Herod the Great (Mt. 2. 3). Herod the tetrarch (Mt. 14. 1; Lk. 13. 31; 23. 7; Acts 13. 1) was Herod Antipas, another son of Herod the Great. The Herod of 25. 13 was Herod Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I.

The first persecution was local and individual. It was instigated by the *Sadducees* and chief priests (4. 1; 5. 17). The first general persecution (6. 12; 8. 1–4) was instigated by the *Pharisees*. The second general persecution was instigated by *Herod*. In other words, the first two persecutions, special and general, had their origin with the Jewish *church* authorities, while the church membership was limited to *Jews;* the third (second general) persecution had its origin with the Roman *State* authorities, when Christianity had spread to the *Gentiles*.

The object of Herod's policy was to "please the Jews." He sought to increase his popularity with them by perse-

cuting the unpopular Christians. He singled out what he would call the ringleaders of the movement.

James (v. 2). The apostle, brother of John (Mt. 4. 21; 10. 2). God could of course have saved James from death, as He saved Peter, but the time of James' release had arrived. He was now called to "drink the cup" that Jesus drank and to "sit on his right hand" (Mt. 20. 20–23). Not, however, as he had thought some years before, in an *earthly* kingdom, but in the kingdom of *glory*. He was relieved of his labors to be at home with his Lord.

The days of unleavened bread (v. 3). Popularly identified with the Feast of the Passover, or Easter, April, 44 A.D. See Lk. 21. 1, 7.

Four quaternions (v. 4). A quaternion consisted of four soldiers, making sixteen in all, each quaternion taking turns to guard the prisoner each watch of the night. The watches were from 6 to 9 and 9 to 12 P.M., and 12 to 3 and 3 to 6 A.M. This was of course repeated during the four quarters of the day. Compare Lk. 12. 38. Two of the soldiers were with Peter in the cell, one at the door of the cell, and one at the gate to the prison (vv. 6, 10). Around the courtyard was a wall with an iron gate leading to the street and the city (v. 10). This was Peter's third imprisonment (4. 3; 5. 18). The recollection of what happened the second time caused the authorities to take extra precautions this third time. It is quite likely that Peter was chained to the two soldiers occupying the cell with him. From vv. 5 and 6 we see that Peter must have spent several days and nights in prison. Herod would not injure his own popularity with the Jews

and pollute "the days of unleavened bread" by the shedding of blood. This shows how earnestly the Christians must have prayed for Peter (v. 5) and what persevering prayer it must have been, when we find many still "gathered together and praying" (v. 12) in the night, after perhaps several nights of watching and prayer.

b. Peter's Deliverance. 12. 6–11.

6 And when Herod was about to bring him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains: and guards before the door kept the prison. 7 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shined in the cell: and he smote Peter on the side, and awoke him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off from his hands. 8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And he did so. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. 9 And he went out, and followed; and he knew not that it was true which was done by the angel, but thought he saw a vision. 10 And when they were past the first and the second guard, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth into the city; which opened to them of its own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and straightway the angel departed from him. 11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a truth, that the Lord hath sent forth his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

Bring him forth (v. 6). For public execution.

Peter was sleeping. What testimony to his faith and his peace with God! And this though Peter knew of Herod's intentions (v. 11).

Behold, an angel of the Lord (v. 7). Compare the

almost identical language of Lk. 2. 9. Also the event recorded in Acts 5. 19.

Gird thyself (v. 8). Peter had taken off his sandals, unloosed his girdle, and was using his outer cloak as a bed-cover (Ex. 22. 26, 27).

The expectation. The happy prospect of seeing Peter put to death (v. 4).

The hand of Herod (v. 11). If Herod had heard of the prayers of the Christians for Peter's release he would have laughed when he thought of the strong cell and the quaternion of soldiers. But the prayer of faith proved stronger than iron bars and Roman guard.

c. Peter Comes to the Praying Christians. 12. 12–19.

12 And when he had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together and were praying. 13 And when he knocked at the door of the gate, a maid came to answer, named Rhoda. 14 And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for joy, but ran in, and told that Peter stood before the gate. 15 And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she confidently affirmed that it was even so. And they said, It is his angel. 16 But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened, they saw him, and were amazed. 17 But he beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him forth out of the prison. And he said, Tell these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went to another place. 18 Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of Peter. 19 And when Herod had sought for him, and found him not, he examined the guards, and commanded that they should be put to death. And he went down from Judæa to Cæsarea, and tarried there.

The house of Mary (v. 12). She appears to have been a woman of sufficient means to place a house of considerable size at the disposal of the Christians as a place of meeting.

John Mark. The writer of the Gospel bearing his name. He was Barnabas' cousin or nephew (Col. 4. 10) and the attendant of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (13. 5). It is also possible, as some have believed, that he was the "young man" of Mk. 14. 51, 52. Peter calls him "my son" (1 Pet. 5. 13) and may therefore have been instrumental in his conversion.

The door of the gate (v. 13). The door in the gateway leading into the courtyard. Rhoda served as portress. Compare Peter's earlier experience with another portress at a similar gateway (Jn. 18. 15–18).

Peter's voice (v. 14). It was customary to call, as well as to knock, when seeking admission to a house (10. 18; Rev. 3. 20).

It is his angel (v. 15). His guardian angel. It is encouraging to us that even these early Christians were "of little faith." They prayed indeed, they prayed "earnestly," and it was persevering prayer. But even they could not believe that their prayer had been heard. Doubtless, like the apostles on Easter evening, they "disbelieved for joy" (Lk. 24. 41).

To hold their peace (v. 17). Not to ask questions, in order that he might answer all their questions at once by "declaring unto them how the Lord had brought him forth out of the prison."

Unto James. Not the James of v. 2, but James the brother of Jesus (Mk. 6. 3; Gal. 1. 19). He was to be informed because he was the head of the church in Jerusalem, though not present at this prayer meeting. Peter no doubt knew that James the brother of John had departed this life.

The brethren. Perhaps other groups of Christians praying in secret for Peter's release.

Another place. Some other house in Jerusalem. The place is not mentioned, to indicate that he went into hiding, as the authorities would be certain to look for him.

No small stir among the soldiers (v. 18). The law made them responsible with their lives for their prisoners (16. 27; 27. 42).

Put to death (v. 19). Literally, "brought forth." They were court-martialed and "led out" to execution in the place of Peter (v. 4). The death of these soldiers, as the result of Peter's liberation and for no fault of their own, must be written down on the account of Herod. God did not indeed forcibly prevent it, but our faith in Him assures us that for good reasons beyond our sight He included it in His gracious providence.

He went down. Herod. The wording indicates that he was chagrined over his failure to put Peter to death and ingratiate himself with the Jews. They had no love for the king and perhaps even laughed at his discomfiture. At all events he withdrew to his capital in Cæsarea and "tarried there" in a sulk.

d. Herod's Death. 12. 20–24.

20 Now he was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: and they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the kings' chamberlain their friend, they asked for peace, because their country was fed from the king's country. 21 And upon a set day Herod arrayed himself in royal apparel, and sat on the throne, and made an oration unto them. 22 And the people shouted, saying, The voice of a god, and not of a man. 23 And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.

24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.

Displeased with them (v. 20). Phœnicia got its grain supply from Palestine. See Lk. 22. 17. As early as the time of Solomon there was an alliance between Phœnicia and Palestine. See 1 K. 5. 12. Their alleged offence may have been a high tariff or some unfair advantage taken in their commercial relations with Palestine. Herod cut off their supply and diverted the trade from the ports of Tyre and Sidon to other countries. The Phœnicians were therefore forced to "ask for peace," that is, to come to terms.

Having made Blastus their friend. By the usual high bribery in high circles. The chamberlain in turn, perhaps by the same means, secured audience for them with the king.

Upon a set day (v. 21). They had chosen a favorable opportunity. Herod was celebrating the safe return of Claudius from his expedition against Britain. This celebration was made in servile honor of the emperor, as Herod reigned only by imperial favor.

The people shouted (v. 22). They knew what was expected of them. The Phœnician ambassadors would be sure to join in the applause. The shout was a deification like that accorded to the Roman emperors and therefore by implication the highest flattery.

Gave not God the glory (v. 23). The vain king fell for the coarse flattery.

Smote him. Struck him. For a very different kind of smiting by an angel see v. 7. History informs us that Herod was afflicted with a loathsome disease, that on this very day violent pains seized him, and that on the fifth day this "god" was dead. The event was a divine judgment by means of causes that we are pleased to call "natural." Herod fancied he had numbered Peter's days; God had numbered Herod's. The king's glory was laid in the dust; Peter continued to live on and proclaim the Gospel of Christ to the glory of the King of kings.

Grew and multiplied (v. 24). The word "but" implies that this was the effect of the persecution. In spite of the persecution, and as a result of the persecution, the gospel continued to spread in the hearts of ever-increasing numbers. The persecuting *king* died, "but the word of God grew and multiplied" like the flames of a spreading fire.

B. Acts of Paul. 12. 25 — 28. 31

This Second Main Division marks the extension of the Church throughout the Roman Empire. It is the *third* step in the plan as outlined in the words of Jesus, *"and unto the uttermost part of the earth"* (1. 8, key-verse). The Church, *founded* by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, *established* by the work of the apostles in Jerusalem, *organized* by the election of the Seven, *scattered* by persecution throughout Judæa, Samaria, Galilee, and Syria, is now to be *extended* into Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece, and Rome.

Hitherto the Church had consisted of Jews, proselytes, the mixed population of Samaria, the Roman family in Cæsarea, and a few Greeks at Antioch. Now the *Gentiles* as such become the field of missionary enterprise on a large scale, and the Church becomes the *Church Universal.*

In the First Main Division of Acts *Peter* has been the chief character. He now retreats into the background and after a brief mention in 15. 7–11 disappears from the scene, while *Paul* takes up the tale and becomes the leading spirit to the end of the Book. The apostle of the circumcision gives place to the apostle to the *Gentiles.*

I. IN ASIA MINOR, MACEDONIA, AND GREECE. 12. 25—21. 17.

1. First Missionary Journey. 12. 25—14. 28.

47–49 A.D.

a. The Call at Antioch. 12. 25—13. 3.

25 And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministration, taking with them John whose surname was Mark.

13. 1 Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers, Barnabas, and Symeon that was called called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. 2 And as they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3 Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

Barnabas and Saul (v. 25). This verse closes the First Division and begins the Second Division. It places in Antioch the three missionaries of the first Journey. Antioch is the starting point of all the three Missionary Journeys. It is the new center of the Christian Gentile Church.

From Jerusalem. This looks back to 11. 27–30. It was from Antioch that Barnabas and Saul had been sent by "the disciples" with "relief unto the brethren that dwelt in Judæa." After they had "fulfilled their ministration," that is, discharged this commission, they now return to their starting point, which had also previously

become their new field of labor (11. 20–26). From Jerusalem they brought with them "John whose surname was Mark." His home was in Jerusalem. See 12. 12 and note.

"Barnabas and Saul" is the order in which these names occur from 11. 30 to 13. 7. Barnabas was probably the older man. He had also befriended Saul in Jerusalem (9. 26, 27). He would therefore naturally take the lead, and Saul would serve as his assistant. In the list of "prophets and teachers" (13. 1) the name of Barnabas stands at the head and Saul's name at the end. From 13. 43, however, when "Saul" becomes "Paul," the order is reversed and with only two exceptions (in Jerusalem, 15. 12, 25) it is "Paul and Barnabas." The greater and more powerful spirit takes the lead.

Prophets and teachers (v. 1). Preachers and instructors. See note to 11. 27. The teachers were the catechists who instructed the converts and prepared them for baptism. Compare Rom. 12. 6, 7; 1 Cor. 12. 28, 29; Eph. 4. 11; Heb. 6. 2.

Niger. "Black." Some have identified him with Simon of Cyrene, Northern Africa (Mt. 27. 32). *Lucius* was from the same city (Rom. 16. 21). *Manæn,* the foster-brother of Herod Antipas, the son of Herod the Great. Little did the house of Herod realize that it was rearing a future Christian and leader in the church. Of these three nothing further is known. Observe the typical variety in this little group with respect to geographical origin and degree of culture.

Ministered to the Lord (v. 2). Performed public worship.

The Holy Spirit said. Through one of these "prophets." The Holy Spirit is the divine Spirit of the body of the Church, as the human soul is the spirit of the physical body. He is its quickening life, its directing light, its energizing power.

The work. The conversion of the Gentiles.

Laid their hands on them (v. 3). The imposition of hands of ordination and commission to be missionary apostles. Compare 6. 6.

b. Cyprus. 13. 4–12.

4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, went down to Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus. 5 And when they were at Salamis, they proclaimed the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John as their attendant. 6 And when they had gone through the whole island unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Bar-Jesus; 7 who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding. The same called unto him Barnabas and Saul, and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn aside the proconsul from the faith. 9 But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him, 10 and said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him

by the hand. 12 Then the proconsul, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Sent forth by the Holy Spirit (v. 4). These missionaries did not need to doubt their divine call and calling! This verse marks the beginning of the First Missionary Journey, which ends with 14. 28.

Seleucia. Antioch lay 16 miles inland on the Orontes river. Seleucia was its seaport at the mouth of the river.

They sailed to Cyprus. No doubt because this island was the native place of Barnabas and he desired to share the Good News with his countrymen (4. 36).

Salamis. A town on the east end of Cyprus.

John. John Mark (12. 12, 25).

Paphos (v. 6). A town on the west end of Cyprus. It was the capital of the island and the residence of the Roman governor (v. 7). The title "proconsul," given by Luke, was doubted by some scholars till the recent discovery of an inscription dated "in the proconsulship of Paulus."

A sorcerer. Compare 8. 9–24.

Bar-Jesús. "The son of Joshua." "Jesus" is the Greek form of the Hebrew name "Joshua."

Elymas (v. 8). An Arabian name meaning "sorcerer."

Saul, who is also Paul (v. 9). The name by which the apostle is universally known appears here for the first time. It was the custom among the Jews when living in foreign lands to take an additional Greek or Latin name. Compare the names occurring in the closing greetings of the epistles to the Romans, First Corinthians, and Colossians. These acquaintances were mostly Jews, but the

names are nearly all Greek or Latin. "John Mark" is another example. "Barnabas" is Hebrew (Aramaic), but was easily pronounced. His real name was Joseph (4. 36). Paul did not *take* this name now. Certainly not "in compliment to his first convert." Observe the verb, "who *is* also Paul." But from now on he *uses* his Gentile name. The new environment of his labors is indicated and typified by the adoption of the *Roman* name. He had been Saul the Pharisee; then Saul the Christian; now he becomes Paul the apostle to the Gentiles. "Saul" means "asked for," but the sound of the name in the ears of a Greek had the sense of "waddling." "Paul" means "little."

Full of all guile (v. 10). Paul waxes indignant with this enemy of the truth. It was "righteous indignation" against an incarnate evil spirit who persevered in the criminal intent to "turn aside the proconsul from the faith" (v. 8). Paul had tolerated him for awhile, but now patience had ceased to be a virtue. Moreover, he saw that the success of the designs of Elymas would seriously affect the cause of the gospel on the whole island, and such an issue it was his duty as an apostle to defeat.

Thou shalt be blind (v. 11). In the Spirit Paul sees the impending judgment of God upon the man and announces it. See note on Ananias and Sapphira (5. 1). But the modifying phrase, "for a season," suggests that the blindness was sent upon him to serve, if possible, the same purpose as the blindness of Paul himself. Certainly Paul must have prayed for this when he saw Elymas going about "seeking some to lead him by the hand." See 9. 8.

c. Galatia. 13. 13, 14; 28.

aa. *Antioch of Pisidia.* 13. 13–52.

(1) *In the Synagogue.* 13. 13–15.

13 Now Paul and his company set sail from Paphos, and came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departed from them and returned to Jerusalem. 14 But they, passing through from Perga, came to Antioch of Pisidia; and they went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and sat down. 15 And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

Perga in Pamphylia (v. 13). On the south coast of Asia Minor.

John departed from them. The reason is not known, but the act was highly displeasing to Paul (15. 38). William Ramsay advances the theory that they had intended to go west along the coast, but Paul was stricken with malarial fever and sought the higher altitude of Galatia for relief. Mark either questions the motive in this, or fears to follow into a region known to be infested with robbers. Compare Gal. 4. 13; 2 Cor. 11. 26 ("in peril of robbers"). Other theories are, that Mark objected to the conversion of so many *Gentiles,* or that he became jealous because Paul's reputation was beginning to eclipse that of Barnabas, Mark's uncle or cousin. The fact that they did not stop to preach in Perga this time should be noted. Compare 14. 25.

Antioch of Pisidia (v. 14). Not the Antioch of Syria, but a city of Galatia. It adjoined the province of Pisidia.

Sabbath day. The Jewish sabbath, Saturday.

Sat down. In the rear of the room. The rulers of the synagogue "*sent* unto them" (v. 15), that is, sent word by an attendant from the front part of the room.

If ye have any word (v. 15). It was customary in the synagogues thus to call upon some respected member or noted visitor to take part in the service. Compare the occasion in Nazareth when Jesus was asked to speak (Lk. 4. 16).

Then, as now, the service consisted of (1) the reading of the Shema, a kind of creed composed of Dt. 6. 4–9; 11. 13–21; Num. 15. 37–41; (2) fixed prayers and benedictions; (3) a lesson from the Law; (4) a lesson from the prophets, these lessons corresponding to our Epistle and Gospel texts; (5) a sermon or some word of instruction. It was at this last point that the visitors were asked to speak.

Paul stood up (v. 16). The language of an eye-witness, very likely Luke himself, who came from this city. See Introduction. Observe also the "we" in v. 22. The Jewish custom was to sit while addressing the congregation (Lk. 4. 20). Paul adopts the Grecian manner of standing and "beckoning with the hand."

(2) *Paul's Sermon.* 13. 16–41.

16 And Paul stood up, and beckoning with the hand said,

Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, hearken: 17 The God of this people Israel chose our fathers, and exalted the people when they sojourned in the land of Egypt, and with a high arm led he them forth out of it. 18 And for about the time of forty

years as a nursing-father bare he them in the wilderness. 19 And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land for an inheritance, for about four hundred and fifty years: 20 and after these things he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet. 21 And afterward they asked for a king: and God gave unto them Saul the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, for the space of forty years. 22 And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king; to whom also he bare witness and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who shall do all my will. 23 Of this man's seed hath God according to promise brought unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus; 24 when John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. 25 And as John was fulfilling his course, he said, What suppose ye that I am? I am not he. But behold, there cometh one after me the shoes of whose feet I am not worthy to unloose. 26 Brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and those among you that fear God, to us is the word of this salvation sent forth. 27 For they that dwell in Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath, fulfilled them by condemning him. 28 And though they found no cause of death in him, yet asked they of Pilate that he should be slain. 29 And when they had fulfilled all things that were written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a tomb. 30 But God raised him from the dead: 31 and he was seen for many days of them that came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses unto the people. 32 And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers, 33 that God hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. 34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. 35 Because he saith also in another psalm, Thou wilt not give thy

Holy One to see corruption. 36 For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: 37 but he whom God raised up saw no corruption. 38 Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins: 39 and by him every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. 40 Beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken in the prophets:

41 Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish;
For I work a work in your days,
A work which ye shall in no wise believe, if one declare it unto you.

Men of Israel (v. 17). Jews. Ye that fear God. Proselytes.

The following outline gives a survey of the sermon:

1. *Introduction:* Old Testament history. 17–25.
   1. The birth of the nation of Israel (Its childhood). 17.
   2. God's patient training (Its youth). 18.
   3. Its inheritance (when "of age"). 19.
   4. God's providence in the land of Canaan (during their "maturity") by—
      a. Judges. 20.
      b. Prophets. 20.
      c. Kings. 21, 22.
      d. John the Baptist. 24, 25.
      e. Jesus. 23.

II. *The Gospel Message:* The word of salvation through Christ.
   1. His death. 27–29.
   2. His resurrection. 30–37.
   3. Forgiveness and justification. 38, 39. (The climax of the sermon.)

III. *Conclusion:* Appeal and warning. 40, 41.

Observe the four Scripture quotations from memory: Ps. 2. 7; 16. 10; Is. 55. 3; Hab. 1. 5.

Seven nations (v. 19). See Dt. 7. 1.

Those among you that fear God, and *us* (v. 26) includes the *Gentiles,* here represented by the proselytes. Compare Peter's Pentecost sermon (2. 29–31).

The second Psalm (v. 33). Ps. 2. 7.

Blessings of David (v. 34). Quoted from Is. 55. 3. Unless Jesus had risen, the promises to David could not have been fulfilled.

See corruption (v. 35). Ps. 16. 10. Compare note on 2. 27.

(3) *The Effect of the Sermon.* 13. 42–52.

42 And as they went out, they besought that these words might be spoken to them the next sabbath. 43 Now when the synagogue broke up, many of the Jews and of the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas; who, speaking to them, urged them to continue in the grace of God.

44 And the next sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. 45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with jealousy, and contradicted the things which were spoken by Paul, and blasphemed. 46

And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. 47 For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying,

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles,
That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost part of the earth.

48 And as the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. 49 And the word of the Lord was spread abroad throughout all the region. 50 But the Jews urged on the devout women of honorable estate, and the chief men of the city, and stirred up a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and cast them out of their borders. 51 But they shook off the dust of their feet against them, and came to Iconium. 52 And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Followed Paul and Barnabas (v. 43). Was Luke one of these?

To continue in the grace of God. Compare 11. 23.

Almost the whole city (v. 44). This would include many of the Gentile population.

They were filled with jealousy (v. 45). Those Jews who refused to believe that Jesus is the Christ (14. 2).

And blasphemed. They said, "Jesus is anathema" (1 Cor. 12. 3; Acts 18. 6).

Unworthy of eternal life (v. 46). No doubt an allusion to those who were bidden to the marriage supper (Mt. 22. 8).

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles. Is. 49. 6.

The Gentiles were glad (v. 48). "To the Jew first, and *also to the Greek*" (Rom. 1. 16; 2. 10).

Ordained to eternal life. "Ordained" is originally a military term and means "mobilized," "organized," "drawn up in battle array," "prepared" for marching or for an engagement. There is therefore no Calvinistic or fatalistic predestination taught in this passage. The word may mean at most "prepared," that is, by repentance in heart and life to believe in Christ and inherit "eternal life,"—in opposition to the equally voluntary impenitence and unbelief of the Jews in v. 46. The true doctrine of Predestination is taught in Rom. 8: 29, 30. Compare 1 Tim. 2. 4; 4. 10.

Devout women of honorable estate (v. 50). Women converts to the Jewish religion and belonging to the aristocracy. These could be induced in the name of "law and order," with "the chief men of the city," to shield the synagogue against the "disturbers of the peace."

Shook off the dust of their feet (v. 51). The Jews had a saying that the dust of heathen lands defiled the feet. Shaking off the dust of their feet was therefore a sign of condemnation upon these enemies of the gospel and their sympathizers, as if they were heathens. Compare the words of Jesus in Mt. 6. 11; 10. 14.

The disciples (v. 52). In Antioch. In spite of the persecution and the enforced departure of the apostles they "continued in the grace of God" (v. 43) and experienced the abiding and comforting presence of the Holy Spirit.

bb. *Iconium.* 14. 1–7.

1 And it came to pass in Iconium that they entered together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake that a great multitude both of Jews and of Greeks believed. 2 But the Jews that were disobedient stirred up the souls of the Gentiles, and made them evil affected against the brethren. 3 Long time therefore they tarried there speaking boldly in the Lord, who bare witness unto the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. 4 But the multitude of the city was divided; and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. 5 And when there was made an onset both of the Gentiles and of the Jews with their rulers, to treat them shamefully and to stone them, 6 they became aware of it, and fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe, and the region round about: 7 and there they preached the gospel.

Iconium (v. 1). A city eighty miles east of Antioch. Its modern name is Konieh.

The synagogue. Into the synagogue first. Paul never neglected an opportunity to share the Good News with his "kinsmen according to the flesh." "My heart's desire and my supplication to God is for them, that they may be saved" (Rom. 10. 1). Compare also Rom. 9. 1–3.

Greeks. It may be that in this city Greeks were permitted to attend the services of the synagogue.

Gentiles. The irreligious or heathen population of the city.

Bare witness (v. 3). See 4. 30; Rom. 15. 18, 19; 2 Cor. 12. 12; Heb. 2. 4.

Apostles (v. 4). Paul and Barnabas are here called apostles for the first time after their "separation" for the work to which they were called by the Holy Spirit (13.

2, 3). By derivation the word means "missionary," that is, "one sent." "Apostle" is Greek, and "missionary" is Latin, for the same root idea. Compare Heb. 3. 1.

An onset (v. 5). An attack. This was the second persecution in Iconium. Verse 2 gives the first.

Treat them shamefully. Mob them and manhandle them.

Fled (v. 6). According to the instructions of Jesus (Mt. 10. 23).

Lycaonia. The district in which the cities Lystra and Derbe were located.

cc. *Lystra and Derbe.* 14. 8–20.

8 And at Lystra there sat a certain man, impotent in his feet, a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked. 9 The same heard Paul speaking: who, fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, 10 said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked. 11 And when the multitude saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voice, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. 12 And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury, because he was the chief speaker. 13 And the priest of Jupiter whose temple was before the city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the multitudes. 14 But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they rent their garments, and sprang forth among the multitude, crying out 15 and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and bring you good tidings, that ye should turn from these vain things unto a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that in them is: 16 who in the generations gone by suffered all the nations to walk in their own ways. 17 And

yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness. 18 And with these sayings scarce restrained they the multitudes from doing sacrifice unto them.

19 But there came Jews thither from Antioch and Iconium: and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul, and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. 20 But as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and entered into the city: and on the morrow he went forth with Barnabas to Derbe.

Lystra (v. 8). A city eighteen miles southwest of Iconium. It was the home of Timothy (16. 1).

A cripple. Compare 3. 2–11.

The speech of Lycaonia (v. 11). A rude dialect which the apostles did not understand. The people were bilingual, and their own native speech would come more readily to their lips. Perhaps, too, they used it in secret deference to their high visitors and to conceal their intentions for the purpose of making the sacrifice an agreeable surprise.

Called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercury (v. 12). Jupiter (Zeus) was the supreme god of the Greek pantheon. Mercury (Hermes) was the spokesman and messenger of the Greek gods. Barnabas was called Jupiter because he was probably older than Paul. Perhaps also taller and of more commanding presence. Paul was taken for Mercury for the obverse reasons and because he did the talking.

There was an old tradition in Lystra that in the neighboring province of Phrygia Jupiter and Mercury

once "appeared in the guise of needy strangers and, repelled from a thousand doors, had been welcomed in the poor hut of a couple of aged peasants."

Done sacrifice (v. 13). Made an offering of the garlanded ox to the two supposed "gods."

Heard of it (v. 14). The preparations had proceeded so far without protest on the part of the apostles because they had not understood the language used and could not imagine that they were to be the objects of this worship.

Rent their garments. They did not tear them to pieces in a fit of fury. They simply observed the Jewish custom of ripping the tunic a few inches down the breast. This was a symbolic act in token that the garment of divine truth had been rent by an act of blasphemy. Compare 2 Sam. 13. 31; 2 K. 5. 7, 8; Is. 37. 1; Jer. 36. 24; Joel 2. 13; Mt. 26. 65.

Passions (v. 15). Nature. Compare Jas. 5. 17.

Made the heaven and the earth. Observe the similar contents when Paul addressed other idol-worshipers in Athens (17. 23–25, 29, 30). Paul adapted his preaching to the capacity and special needs of his audience. To these idolaters he speaks of (1) the unity of God, (2) His creative power, and (3) His benevolence. Compare Rom. 1. 19, 20. Paul would certainly have followed up these introductory statements with the gospel message, as he began to do in Athens, had he not been prevented by still another persecution instigated by the disbelieving Jews from Antioch and Iconium (v. 19). The superstitious and fickle crowd must have been persuaded by the

Jews that the miracle was performed by the aid of evil spirits (Mt. 12. 24).

Stoned Paul (v. 19). Compare 2 Cor. 11. 25. The Christian Paul now makes trial of the sufferings of Stephen to which the unbelieveing Saul had given his consent (7. 58; 8. 1; 22. 20).

He rose up (v. 20). To be able to rise up and walk into the city after such an experience, and then journey "on the morrow" thirty miles to Derbe, would argue that the apostle must have been quickened from a source higher than mere natural vitality. The account gives the impression of an extraordinary recovery. It is highly probable that Luke and Timothy, as well as Barnabas, were among those who "stood round about him." The near martyrdom of the apostle and his marvelous recovery must have made an impression that remained with them for life. Compare Paul's reference to these experiences in writing to Timothy some fifteen years later (2 Tim. 3. 10, 11).

Derbe. A city thirty miles east of Lystra.

dd. *The Return.* 14. 21–28.

21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, 22 confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God. 23 And when they had appointed for them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed. 24 And they passed through

Pisidia, and came to Pamphylia. 25 And when they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia; 26 and thence they sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been committed to the grace of God for the work which they had fulfilled. 27 And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all things that God had done with them, and that he had opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles. 28 And they tarried no little time with the disciples.

Returned to Lystra (v. 21). Where Paul had been stoned. Marvelous courage and devotion! Compare the key-verse 1. 8 again, "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Compare also v. 22. There is a deeper tone and an enlarged love in this and the following verses.

Elders (v. 23). See note to 11. 30.

Prayed with fasting. The same solemn service which had been used when Paul and Barnabas were dedicated at Antioch for their present labor (13. 3).

Pisidia (v. 24). The district south of Antioch and north of the district Pamphylia in which the city of Perga and its seaport, Attalia, were situated.

Once more we would urge upon the reader to make constant use of Bible maps, tracing the journeys and noting the cities, districts, provinces, and countries, as they occur.

Antioch (v. 26). *Syrian* Antioch. They had now returned to the home base, the starting and terminal point of their journey.

Gathered the church (v. 27). The first example of a "missionary meeting." The missionary society here consisted of the entire church.

Rehearsed all things. Submitted a detailed report.

God had done. He received the glory. The missionaries were only responsive limbs in the body which He actuated by His indwelling Spirit. Compare 15. 4, 12; Mk. 16. 20.

Gentiles. Observe the prominence given to this word and the emphasis with which it closes the account.

2. The Apostolic Council at Jerusalem. 15. 1–35.

a. The Controversy. 15. 1–5.

1 And certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved. 2 And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and questioning with them, the brethren appointed that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. 3 They therefore, being brought on their way by the church, passed through both Phœnicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. 4 And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church and the apostles and the elders, and they rehearsed all things that God had done with them. 5 But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed, saying, It is needful to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses.

Chapter 15 interrupts the account of the Missionary Journeys to describe an event of supreme importance to the work of missions, namely, the standing of the uncircumcised Gentiles received into the Christian Church. It was generally admitted that a Gentile could be saved. But must he be circumcised and keep the laws of Moses? If not, was circumcision still obligatory for the Jew? And what was to be the standing of the uncircumcised Christian? Was he to remain in an inferior position, like the proselyte in the synagogue? Or was he to be recognized as the equal of the circumcised Christian? These questions were pressing for an answer.

Legalistic Jews came down from Jerusalem, the Jewish-Christian center, to Antioch, the Gentile-Christian center, and laid down the dogmatic position to the converted heathen members there, "Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (v. 1). They had no authority from the Church in Jerusalem to do this (15. 24), but they were prompted by their zeal for the law to take the initiative and based their action on such passages as Is. 52. 1. The consequence was "no small dissension." The matter was serious. Was the position taken by Paul and Barnabas correct? Or were these Jews in the right? That was the question to be settled by the Council now called to convene in Jerusalem. Except the question of the deity of Christ, considered by the Council of Nicæa (325 A.D.), no other question of equal importance has ever confronted the Christian Church. It meant, in brief: Do we attain righteousness by works, or are we justified by faith? Do we earn heaven by good deeds, or are we saved by grace?

The Jewish Christians contended that according to the Scriptures the blessing promised to Abraham was the inheritance of his natural descendants, that is, the Jews (Gen. 22. 18). To share in that blessing it was therefore necessary for the Gentiles to become Jews first by receiving the sign of circumcision. Paul and Barnabas on the contrary contended that Jews and Gentiles alike were saved only by faith in Christ; that a literal interpretation of the passages adduced shut out their true spiritual import and blinded the eyes of the Judaizers to the truth of God; that "the seed" of Abraham meant Christ and those

who trusted in Him for salvation; and that therefore circumcision was altogether unnecessary.

As usual, in matters of difference in spiritual vision, point of view, and Scripture interpretation, they were unable to arrive at a mutual agreement. The church in Antioch therefore decided to send a delegation to "the apostles and elders" in Jerusalem for a thorough consideration and final solution of the vexing problem. "Paul and Barnabas and certain other of them" were elected (v. 2). Upon their arrival they encountered "certain of the sect of the Pharisees who believed," and these reiterated the demand of those who had come from Jerusalem to Antioch: "It is needful to circumcise them (the Gentile Christians) and to charge them to keep the law of Moses" (v. 5).

Compare the account of this meeting as given by Paul in Gal. 2. 1–10. From this passage it also appears that it required a special revelation to induce Paul to attend. Among "certain others" was Titus.

b. The Conference. 15. 6–21.

aa. *The Gathering.* 15. 6, 7.

6 And the apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider of this matter. 7 And when there had been much questioning Peter rose up, and said unto them.

The apostles and the elders (v. 6). This verse gives the formal summoning. It was a meeting of "the ministerium." The question to be discussed was of a *doctrinal* as well as practical nature, and therefore it was the *spiritual leaders* who were the responsible authorities to give

consideration to the matter and pronounce upon it before referring it to the body of the church (v. 22).

Much questioning (v. 7). It was a many-sided problem; and it was a critical question. It had to be considered from all of its various angles and with all of the issues in mind. The debate therefore grew long and led to no unanimous conclusion. Luke does not give the speeches on the negative side, as this did not prevail and was lost.

bb. *Peter's Address.* 15. 7–11.

Brethren, ye know that a good while ago God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, who knoweth the heart, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Spirit, even as he did unto us; 9 and he made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith. 10 Now therefore why make ye trial of God, that ye should put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? 11 But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in like manner as they.

A good while ago (v. 8). Peter alludes to the conversion of Cornelius, which had taken place some ten years previous. It was a crucial case and most pertinent to the present discussion. God himself had put the seal of His approval on the faith of the uncircumcised Cornelius and those who were with him by "giving them the Holy Spirit" (v. 8), exactly as the same Spirit had been given to the circumcised believers among the Jews, thus "making no distinction" (v. 9).

By my mouth. Peter calls himself only the mouthpiece of God.

Who knoweth the heart. Peter had learned this in his own experience.

Make trial of God (v. 10). Tempt God to send punishment upon them; challenge His authority and power by distrusting His evident guidance and disobeying His revealed will (Ps. 95. 9; 1 Cor. 10. 9; Heb. 3. 9).

A yoke. Circumcision and the ceremonial regulations of the Mosaic legislation (Gal. 5. 1). Compare the "easy yoke and light burden" of Jesus (Mt. 11. 30) with the "burdens grievous to be borne" of Lk. 11. 46. All these legal and ritual precepts had proven to be intolerable to both "the fathers" and their descendants.

We believe (v. 11). Even we *Jews.—As they.* The *Gentile* "disciples." Peter places himself squarely on the side of Paul and defends his policy. And this in spite of the public rebuke he had received from Paul in Antioch shortly before this meeting (Gal. 2. 11–14).

This is the last time Peter appears in Acts. He hands the scepter of leadership, so to speak, over to Paul. How fitting that his last words should be an affirmation of salvation by grace through faith in "the Lord Jesus" alone!

cc. *The Account of Paul and Barnabas.* 15. 12.

12 And all the multitude kept silence; and they hearkened unto Barnabas and Paul rehearsing what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles through them.

The significant silence which followed the address of Peter was broken by Paul and Barnabas, who reported the experiences of their missionary labors among the un-

circumcised "Gentiles." A detailed account of the part Paul took at the Council is given in Gal. 2. 1–5. According to this passage Paul had explained his position "privately before them who were of repute," James, Peter, and John, that is, previously to the general meeting, and had received from these leaders "the right hands of fellowship" in token of perfect agreement.

dd. *The Summary of James.* 15. 13–21.

13 And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying,

Brethren, hearken unto me: 14 Symeon hath rehearsed how first God visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,

16 After these things I will return,
And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen;
And I will build again the ruins thereof,
And I will set it up:
17 That the residue of men may seek after the Lord,
And all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called,
18 Saith the Lord, who maketh these things known from of old.
19 Wherefore my judgment is, that we trouble not them that from among the Gentiles turn to God; 20 but that we write unto them, that they abstain from the pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from what is strangled, and from blood. 21 For Moses from generations of old hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every sabbath.

James (v. 13). The brother of the Lord. His piety, his great faith, his integrity, and his sane conservatism had made him respected by all the Jews. As head of the

church in Jerusalem, where the Council convened, he would naturally preside over the meeting. When the last speaker had finished, he sums up the arguments presented and closes the discussion by giving authoritative judgment. This was in favor of the side defended by Peter, Barnabas, and Paul. James clinches his verdict by a quotation from Amos 9. 11, 12. His voice would rest on the word *"Gentiles"* (1. 17).

Upon whom my name is called (v. 17). "Who are called by my name." A phrase applied in the Old Testament to *Israel.* Its use here therefore implies that the *Gentiles* also had now been adopted to be included in "the chosen people of God." Compare Is. 65. 1; Hos. 1. 10; Rom. 15. 9–12.

The tabernacle of David (v. 16). The kingdom of God in Israel which had fallen into decay.

Trouble not them (v. 19). The Jews were to continue to keep the law, but were not to burden the Gentile converts with rites and cermonies unfamiliar to them.

The entire Epistle to the Galatians should be read in this connection. Also the Epistle of James.

Write unto them (v. 20). In conclusion James suggests the sending of a letter to the church in Antioch. This is the first form of a drafted Symbol or Confession of Faith. It contains four points: (1) pollutions of idols; (2) fornication; (3) what is strangled; (4) blood.

The first two have the notorious sins of the Gentile world in mind; the last two are concessions to Jewish prejudices with regard to unclean food. The Gentile Christians must abstain from all association and all the

customs connected with their former idolatry (1 Cor. 8. 7, 10, 13). And they must observe all the safeguards of social purity developed by the Jews. If the Jewish Christians surrendered their demands for circumcision, it was no more than just that the Gentile Christians deal tenderly with the scruples of their Jewish brethren and refrain in love from giving offence in the matter of meats, that is, to the extent of not eating the flesh of strangled animals from which the blood had not been drained, and from partaking of the blood itself in its natural state or in the form of food (Gen. 9. 4; Lev. 17 and 18; Dt. 14. 21). Compare Acts 21. 25; 1 Cor. 8. 7–13. Meat killed by strangling was considered a great delicacy by the Gentiles. The practice of gross immorality formed a part of idol worship among the heathen and was sanctioned by it. This blunted the conscience and made the morals of all social relations exceedingly lax.

The purpose of the letter was thus to prevent a split in the church, to unite the two factions who were unable to view these matters from the same angle of vision, to render social intercourse between the Jews and Gentiles less difficult, and to secure the harmonious working together of both in the church. The conditions named were, moreover, those required of "proselytes of the gate" (uncircumcised proselytes) before they were admitted to the synagogues. Consequently the Jewish Christians could not well refuse admission to the Christian Church of those who fulfilled these same conditions.

The Council does not assert that all of the four things required are necessary for salvation, but while the last

two are purely ceremonial and therefore local and temporal, the first two are ethical in character and therefore binding for all time. Paul nowhere refers to the third and fourth points in his epistles. In the letter as drafted and sent, this disposition of the contents is not preserved. The Jews of that day had not yet attained to clear ethical distinctions between ceremonial and purely moral laws.

For Moses (v. 21). The argument in this admittedly difficult verse appears to be: "No further legislation is necessary, as the laws of Moses are read in the synagogues, and those of us who wish to be guided by them in these matters do not want for opportunity to be informed, until such time as Judaism finally and entirely gives place to a pure Christianity."

ee. *The Letter.* 15. 22–29.

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men out of their company, and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: 23 and they wrote thus by them, The apostles and the elders, brethren, unto the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting: 24 Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment; 25 it seemed good unto us, having come to one accord, to choose out men and send them unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, 26 men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 27 We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also shall tell you the same things by word of mouth. 28 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these neces-

sary things: 29 that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, it shall be well with you. Fare ye well.

We have anticipated the discussion of the contents of this letter, as it seemed preferable to consider its four points in the order suggested by James. The letter too, with this slight change in the disposition of the material, is simply the suggestion of James put down in writing. The Council seconds the motion of James, and it is unanimously adopted by the whole church (v. 22). The letter is accordingly drafted and sent to Antioch.

Judas called Barsabbas (v. 22). Probably a brother of Joseph, called Barsabbas (1. 23).

Silas. An abbreviation of "Silvanus," the companion of Paul (2 Cor. 1. 19) and later of Peter (1 Pet. 5. 12). According to 16. 37 he was a Roman citizen.

The apostles and the elders, brethren (v. 23). That is, "We apostles and elders are your brothers in Christ and greet you as brothers in Christ."

Our beloved Barnabas and Saul (v. 25). With v. 26 a word of commendation by the Council, to strengthen the confidence of the Antioch church in these men, in the event that it may have been weakened at all by the attacks of the visiting Judaizers. The bearers of the letter, however, were not Paul and Barnabas, but Judas and Silas.

Seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us (v. 28). It was their confident faith and experience that the Holy Spirit had been with them and guided them in their deliberations and unanimous conclusion.

ff. *The Reception of the Letter.* 15. 30–35.

30 So they, when they were dismissed, came down to Antioch; and having gathered the multitude together, they delivered the epistle. 31 And when they had read it, they rejoiced for the consolation. 32 And Judas and Silas, being themselves also prophets, exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed them. 33 And after they had spent some time there, they were dismissed in peace from the brethren unto those that had sent them forth. 35 But Paul and Barnabas tarried in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

Feeling had been tense and the issue very much in doubt. The anxiety in Antioch must have been extremely trying during these long days of waiting. We can therefore understand why they "rejoiced for the consolation, when they had read it" (v. 31). The brotherly greeting with which the letter begins, its tactful language, its kindly tone, its commendation of Barnabas and Paul, its farewell, and above all the reassuring contents of its message, could not fail of this effect.

They were dismissed (v. 33). Judas and Silas, who returned to Jerusalem.

Verse 34 is wanting. See margin, and note to 8. 37.

3. Second Missionary Journey. 15. 36—18. 22.

(50–52 A.D.)

a. The Dissension. 15. 36–40.

36 And after some days Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us return now and visit the brethren in every city wherein we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they fare. 37 And Barnabas was minded to take with them John also, who was called Mark. 38 But Paul thought not good to take with them him who withdrew from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. 39 And there arose a sharp contention, so that they parted asunder one from the other, and Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away unto Cyprus: 40 but Paul chose Silas, and went forth, being commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

It was Paul's first intention that they should go to every city of Cyprus and Galatia, where they had been on their first journey (v. 36). But a disagreement between Paul and Barnabas eliminated Cyprus from Paul's itinerary, and the Spirit of the Lord extended the travels of this servant far beyond Galatia into the northwestern parts of Asia Minor and across the Ægæan into Europe.

The cause of the dispute between the two apostles was John Mark. Barnabas wished to take his cousin along, but Paul refused to agree to this. He considered Mark unreliable and undesirable as an "attendant" (13. 5). His faith in him had been rudely shaken at Perga, on their first journey (13. 13). The consequence was "a sharp contention" and final separation. Barnabas took Mark and sailed across to his native Cyprus, while Paul chose

Silas as his traveling companion (v. 22) and went north by land "through Syria and Cilicia" (v. 41) to Galatia.

It was a sad parting of two good friends, and must have cut both to the heart. Barnabas had befriended Paul when no one believed in him (9. 26, 27). He had gone to Tarsus and sought out Paul to be his fellow-laborer in Antioch (11. 24, 25). They were singled out by the Holy Spirit to be companions in the first missionary journey (13. 2) and had shared the hardships and joys of that work together. And now they separated, never to work together again. Which of the two was in the greater fault is of course not for us to say. We only observe that it was Paul who was "commended by the brethren to the grace of the Lord" (v. 40), and Barnabas is never mentioned again, except for kindly references by Paul himself in later years. See Gal. 2. 1, 9, 13; 1 Cor. 9. 6; Col. 4. 10. Whatever Mark's fault may have been, his later life fully redeemed him. In 2 Tim. 4. 11, Paul writes from his prison in Rome: "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is useful to me for ministering," and in Col. 4. 10 he commends him to the church.

b. The Churches Revisited. 15. 41—16. 6.

41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

16. 1 And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewess that believed; but his father was a Greek. 2 The same was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and he took and circumcised him because of the Jews that were in

those parts: for they all knew that his father was a Greek.
4 And as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered them the decrees to keep which had been ordained of the apostles and elders that were at Jerusalem. 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 And they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been forbidden of the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.

To Derbe and to Lystra (v. 1). The beginning of the revisiting spoken of in 15. 36.

A certain disciple, named Timothy. Timothy was one of Paul's converts on his first visit in Lystra. In 1 Cor. 4. 17 he call him "my beloved and faithful child in the Lord." Elsewhere he calls him "true son in the faith," "Brother," and "fellow-worker." He is the Timothy to whom Paul addressed the two pastoral epistles, when Timothy was in charge of the church in Ephesus. His father was a Greek. His mother's name was Eunice. From his grandmother Lois he had received a devout training in the Old Testament Scriptures (2 Tim. 1. 5; 3. 14, 15).

Go forth with him (v. 3). As his traveling companion, with Silas.

Circumcised him. Not because he deemed it necessary for salvation (see previous chapter), but as a concession to the prejudices of "the Jews that were in these parts." Compare 1 Cor. 9. 20. Paul refused to assent to the circumcision of Titus (Gal. 2. 3–5), but this was because it was demanded by Jewish believers as a condition of salvation. The circumcision of Timothy was merely the

observation of a Jewish custom in "things indifferent," for purely practical ends. Titus, moreover, was a Greek, and Timothy was part Jew. The agreement, too, by the Council at Jerusalem applied only to Gentiles, not to a man born of a Jewish mother. If Timothy had not received the sign of circumcision, his future labors as a teacher of Jews as well as Gentiles would have been seriously hampered.

The decrees (v. 5). See 15. 20.

Phrygia (v. 6). An inland province of Asia Minor, west of Galatia.

Asia. A province on the northwest coast of Asia Minor.

c. The Macedonian Call. 16. 7–10.

7 And when they were come over against Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not; 8 and passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. 9 And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There was a man of Macedonia standing, beseeching him, and saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. 10 And when he had seen the vision, straightway we sought to go forth into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel unto them.

Mysia (v. 7). A province on the west coast of Asia Minor, north of the province of Asia.

Bithynia. A province north of Mysia, on the Black Sea.

Forbidden of the Holy Spirit. Compare "the Holy Spirit," "the Spirit of Jesus," and "God" (v. 10). In some providential manner they were prevented from going into Asia on their left and Bithynia on their right, as they

traveled westward. This compelled them to go straight ahead to Troas, trusting God to keep them from going wrong. The reason for being thus hindered and directed appears in v. 9. God had the evangelization of Europe in mind.

Troas (v. 8). The chief seaport of Mysia. It was situated near the ancient city of Troy.

Macedonia (v. 9). The northern province of Greece. The vision at Troas is the source of the famous missionary phrase, "The Macedonian call."

We sought (v. 10). The first of the sections in Acts in which Luke includes himself. He must have arrived later from Antioch (of Pisidia) and joined the company at Troas. On this journey he continues to use "we" only to v. 17, as he then remains in charge of the church founded by them at Philippi, while Paul and Silas and Timothy proceed south. Upon Paul's return to Philippi on his third missionary journey Luke joins him and resumes the use of "we" from 20. 5 to the end of Acts.

d. Macedonia. 16. 11—17. 15.

aa. *Philippi.* 16. 11–40.

(1) *Lydia.* 16. 11–15.

11 Setting sail therefore from Troas, we made a straight
course to Samothrace, and the day following to Neapolis; 12
and from thence to Philippi, which is a city of Macedonia, the
first of the district, a Roman colony: and we were in this city
tarrying certain days. 13 And on the sabbath day we went
forth without the gate by a river side, where we supposed there
was a place of prayer; and we sat down, and spake unto the

women that were come together. 14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul. 15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

Setting sail (v. 11). Little did the sailors of the ship think that they were bearing the richest treasure ever borne to the shores of Europe—the message of eternal life! And little did the missionaries themselves realize the marvelous fruit that was to grow from the seed they were about to sow on that new continent! But God's servants have to work, as well as to walk, by faith, not by sight (W. ROBERTSON).

Samothrace. An island midway between Troas and Neapolis. The distance across the Ægæan at this point is about 100 miles.

Neapolis. The seaport of Philippi, about ten miles distant.

The first of the district (v. 12). Philippi was the chief city of Macedonia. It was so considered because it was a Roman colony, inhabited by colonists from Italy, mainly soldiers who had received their discharge from the army. The city considered itself as "a little Rome."

A place of prayer (v. 13). The Jews were too few in Philippi to own a synagogue. They met instead "by a river side," the river providing them with water for the usual ceremonial ablutions or washings. Possibly this was also the case "by the rivers of Babylon" (Ps. 137. 1).

The congregation this time consisted of women. These were no doubt all proselytes, as Claudius had banished the Jews from Rome and therefore also from the Roman colonies, of which Philippi was one. This may also account for the circumstance that no men are mentioned as present. Among these women were, later, Euodia and Syntyche, who "labored with Paul in the gospel" (Phil. 4. 2, 3). Paul addressed the gathering, and one of the group of women became the first convert of Europe.

Lydia (v. 14). She was not a Jewess, but a proselyte. Her home was in Thyatira of Lydia, a country in Asia Minor, where she was a maker of the famous Lydian purple fabrics. She was now here in Philippi to dispose of these dyed goods. The language of her invitation and the phrase "my house" suggest that she may have been a widow.

Whose heart the Lord opened. It is the *Lord* who opens the heart to receive the gospel message by faith.

Constrained (v. 15). The same word as used in Lk. 24. 29. She becomes the hostess of the entire company of missionaries.

(2) *The Soothsaying Maid.* 16. 16–18.

16 And it came to pass, as we were going to the place of prayer, that a certain maid having a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. 17 The same following after Paul and us cried out, saying, These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim unto you the way of salvation. 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, being sore troubled, turned and said to the spirit, I charge thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

Going to the place of prayer (v. 16). A different occasion from the one mentioned in v. 13.

A certain maid. A slave girl used as a spiritist medium. It is probable that her owners had mesmerized her till she had been brought into a state of permanent hypnosis and consequent mental weakness. This gives disembodied evil spirits their opportunity to take possession. In the clairvoyant state such mediums are able to read secret thoughts, reveal the hiding-place of lost articles, and foretell future events. This is the meaning of "soothsaying." As people would often pay a handsome fee for such information, it meant a considerable income for the girl's owners. "The spirit of divination" also enabled her to recognize the character and mission of Paul and his companions. What she said about them was true (v. 17), but these "servants of the Most High God" did not desire any confirmation of their message from such a source. Compare the attitude of Jesus toward the demons (Lk. 4. 33–35). When she had followed and annoyed them with her cries "for many days," Paul finally exorcises the evil spirit in the name of Jesus Christ. Twice before the apostles had encountered similar opposition from the powers of darkness, represented by characters in league with their evil designs (8. 9–24; 13. 6–11). For other Scripture passages bearing on spiritism and related phenomena, see 1 Sam. 28. 7–20; Acts 19. 13–16; 1 Tim. 4. 1; Rev. 16. 14. Because all this is of the evil one and gives him a coveted opportunity to injure and destroy us, God forbids such practices and all curious peering within the veil of this kingdom of darkness (Dt. 18. 10–12).

(3) *The Jailor.* 16. 19–34.

19 But when her masters saw that the hope of their gain was
gone, they laid hold on Paul and Silas, and dragged them into
the marketplace before the rulers, 20 and when they had brought
them unto the magistrates, they said, These men, being Jews,
do exceedingly trouble our city, 21 and set forth customs which
it is not lawful for us to receive, or to observe, being Romans.
22 And the multitude rose up together against them: and the
magistrates rent their garments off them, and commanded to
beat them with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes
upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to
keep them safely: 24 who, having received such a charge, cast
them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the
stocks. 25 But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying
and singing hymns unto God, and the prisoners were listening
to them; 26 and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that
the foundations of the prison-house were shaken: and imme-
diately all the doors were opened; and every one's bands were
loosed. 27 And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing
the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill
himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. 28 But Paul
cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we
are all here. 29 And he called for lights and sprang in, and,
trembling for fear, fell down before Saul and Silas, 30 and
brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?
31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be
saved, thou and thy house. 32 And they spake the word of the
Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. 33 And he took
them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes;
and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. 34 And he
brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and
rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed in God.

Paul's cure of the possessed maid was an act in the interest of the Christian faith. It was also a good deed

to the poor demented slave girl, as it delivered her out of the power of the evil spirit and evil men and restored her to sanity. Her owners, however, were highly incensed when their source of profit was thus suddenly cut off, and they naturally sought revenge. They arrested the two leaders and haled them before the rulers who were holding session in the open marketplace. But the owners of the maid did not give the true reason for their resentment against Paul and Silas. There was no law governing such a case. Besides they would only have been laughed at for their pains. So they make believe that they are very patriotic and trump up a charge of treason against the prisoners. So they first prejudice the minds of the magistrates and the crowd by calling attention to the Jewish nationality of the prisoners; then they accuse them of being disturbers of the peace; and finally under the hypocritical guise of patriotism they charge them with treason against the government. The veiled implication was: "This Roman Colony ought to deal with them as our Emperor Claudius lately dealt with the Jews in Rome, namely, banish them." Compare 18. 2.

For the third time Paul was mobbed (14. 5, 19), and for the first of three times he suffered the beating which he himself had inflicted on the Christians (22. 19; 2 Cor. 11. 25). This beating was the "shameful treatment" to which he refers in 1 Th. 2. 2. Silas was his "companion" in this experience. Such was Europe's welcome for the gospel and the messengers who brought it!

Praying and singing (v. 25). Locked up in an inner cell, bleeding and suffering, their wounds neglected, in the extreme discomfort of having "their feet fast in the stocks," and in midnight darkness these two missionaries lift up their voices together in prayer and hymns of praise to God! The answer was an earthquake that flung open all the locked doors and shook the chains from the hands and feet of all the prisoners (v. 26). Evidently it was something more than a natural earthquake. Compare 4. 31. This was the third time that God opened prison doors for His messengers (5. 19; 12. 10).

Kill himself (v. 27). Because a Roman jailor forfeited his life if any of his prisoners escaped (12. 19; 27. 42), and in his despair the heathen warden wished to spare himself from the agony and the shame of a public trial and execution.

He called (v. 29). To his deputies, or assistants.

What must I do to be saved? (v. 30). The great question of every penitent soul. The jailor must have known something about Paul. In some hour off duty he may even have heard him preach. His question was not prompted by any fear of the executioner's sword, so that it meant "saved" from a shameful death. For he now knew that none of the prisoners had escaped (v. 28). And Paul's answer proves that it was the cry of a burdened *soul*.

Believe on the Lord Jesus (v. 31). The briefest summary of the Good News to an anxious inquirer. This was later enlarged upon by Paul and Silas and applied

to the special needs of the jailor "and all that were in his house" (v. 32).

Took them the same hour of the night (v. 33). He washed their wounds; they washed him in the sacrament of holy Baptism. He brought them into his house; they received him into the house of God, the Christian Church. He set food before them; they fed him with the bread of life (v. 34).

Rejoiced greatly (v. 34). Compare this with his earlier despair (vv. 27, 30). His entire family shared in his joy, they too "having believed in God." Observe the relation between this last clause and v. 31. That is, "the Lord Jesus is God."

Such was the issue to which the Holy Spirit had led the exorcising of the maid and the following arrest, beating, and imprisonment of Paul and Silas. Each step must have seemed strange to these servants of God, but each of these steps was leading them to this glorious end. Such is the use He makes of faithful obedience to His will.

This prison warden was the *second* Christian convert in Europe, Lydia being the first.

Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, written from his prison in Rome about 61 A.D., should be read in this connection. Observe, too, in this letter the key-note of "rejoicing."

(4) *Paul Claims Roman Citizenship.* 16. 35–40.

35 But when it was day, the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying, Let those men go. 36 And the jailor reported the words to Paul, saying, The magistrates have sent to let you go: now therefore come forth, and go in peace. 37 But Paul said unto them, They have beaten us publicly, uncondemned, men that are Romans, and have cast us into prison; and do they now cast us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves and bring us out. 38 And the serjeants reported these words unto the magistrates: and they feared when they heard that they were Romans; 39 and they came and besought them; and when they had brought them out, they asked them to go away from the city. 40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia: and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

Serjeants (v. 35). Roman lictors, that is, guards or police. Perhaps the unusual earthquake prompted the authorities to get rid of these strange prisoners as quickly as possible.

Romans (v. 37). Roman citizens. Paul's father was a Roman citizen. Paul was therefore "Roman born" (22. 28). The chief privileges of citizenship in the Empire were: (1) the right to hold office; (2) exemption from direct taxation; (3) right of trial by process of law, instead of by cruel and degrading torture; (4) exemption from corporal punishment, such as scourging, and from death by crucifixion; (5) the right to appeal to the Emperor (25. 11).

Why Paul and Silas did not make use of this right *before* the beating, as he did in Jerusalem (22. 25–29), we can only conjecture. The appeal to it now was to

teach these arbitrary magistrates a needed lesson and to secure the protection of the law for his companions and the Christian converts.

Cast us out privily (v. 37). The arrest and beating had been public; the release must be made equally public.

Came and brought them (v. 39). The humbled and frightened magistrates arrive and beg Paul and Silas not to report them. Because they feared further trouble from the crowds, which might implicate them still further, they ask Paul and his party to leave the city.

Went out of the prison (v. 40). Out of the building, part of which contained the underground cells, and part the rooms of the jailor and his family on the first floor. Observe "up," v. 34.

The house of Lydia. Their quarters, by her invitation (v. 15).

The brethren. The believers, not otherwise mentioned.

They comforted them. Those who would seem to have needed comfort comforted those who would seem to be in no need of comfort. These latter, however, must have been most anxious about the fate of the apostles; and now they grieved because those whom they had learned to love with a new love were "departing" from them.

bb. Thessalonica. 17. 1–9.

1. Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and
Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue
of the Jews: 2 and Paul, as his custom was, went in unto
them, and for three sabbath days reasoned with them from
the scriptures, 3 opening and alleging that it behooved the

Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom, said he, I proclaim unto you, is the Christ. 4 And some of them were persuaded, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. 5 But the Jews, being moved with jealousy, took unto them certain vile fellows of the rabble, and gathering a crowd, set the city on an uproar; and assaulting the house of Jason, they sought to bring them forth to the people. 6 And when they found them not, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also; 7 whom Jason hath received: and these all act contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus. 8 And they troubled the multitude and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. 9 And when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

When they (v. 1). "We" is dropped and "they" is used, because Luke, the writer of Acts, remains behind in charge of the new church in Philippi.

Amphipolis. Southwest of Philippi, thirty-two miles distant. *Appollonia,* thirty miles southwest of Amphipolis. *Thessalonica,* thirty-seven miles west of Apollonia, like Philippi, was a Roman colony, and the capital city of Macedonia. It is the modern Saloniki which has figured so prominently in the late wars. As it was a great trade center it had a considerable Jewish population and therefore "a synagogue of the Jews."

As his custom was (v. 2). Namely, to preach to the Jews first.

Opening. That is, the Old Testament Scriptures, by explaining them. Compare the use of the same word in

Lk. 24. 32. Paul opened the Scriptures, but the Lord alone can open the heart (16. 14).

Alleging. Showing.

The Christ (v. 3, twice). The Messiah promised in the Scriptures. "This Jesus is that Messiah."

The chief women (v. 4). Compare 13. 50. Observe: "some" Jews, "a great multitude" of Greek proselytes, and "not a few" of the prominent women.

Moved with jealousy (v. 5). Compare 13. 45. In employing "certain vile fellows of the rabble" these Jewish religionists no doubt considered that the end justified the means. These assistants were very likely instructed to start shouting in the "crowd" and in this manner to create the mob spirit which stampeded the crowd to "assault the house of Jason." Jason was the host of the group of missionaries.

Bring them forth to the people. That the excited mob might inflict summary vengeance on them.

Jason and certain brethren (v. 6). The plan miscarried as far as the missionaries were concerned. In some manner they had learned of the plot and escaped. The crowd laid hold of Jason and some of the local Christians instead and repeated the process of 16. 19–21. Under the same pretence of patriotism and loyalty to the government they accuse the Christians of disloyalty and treason (v. 7). Compare Lk. 23. 2; Jn. 19. 11. The followers of Jesus shared in His experiences.

Rulers (v. 6). Literally, politarchs. This title has been found in Saloniki on an arch dating back to Paul's time. This shows what an accurate historian Luke was

and how reliable his information is. See notes to 13. 7 and 16. 20.

Turned the world upside down. The way it always looks to the godless world, which *is* "upside down."

Taken security (v. 9). Put under bonds. They were made responsible for future good behavior. The security probably stipulated as a condition that Paul and Silas should leave the city.

Read Paul's Epistles to the Thessalonians, written shortly after this at Corinth.

cc. Berœa. 17. 10–15.

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berœa: who when they were come thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 Now these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, examining the scriptures daily, whether these things were so. 12 Many of them therefore believed; also of the Greek women of honorable estate, and of men, not a few. 13 But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was proclaimed of Paul at Berœa also, they came thither likewise, stirring up and troubling the multitudes. 14 And then immediately the brethren sent forth Paul to go as far as to the sea: and Silas and Timothy abode there still. 15 But they that conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and receiving a commandment unto Silas and Timothy that they should come to him with all speed, they departed.

Berœa (v. 10). A city forty miles southwest of Thessalonica.

More noble (v. 11). These Jews were of a different and better spirit. Thy were not bigoted and fixed in

prejudice against the message of Paul. They were open to conviction and studied the Old Testament for several days to see if Paul might be speaking the truth. ("Berœa" would therefore be a good name for a class of Bible students.) Not all were convinced, but "many of them believed."

Greek women of honorable estate (v. 12). Compare again 13. 50 and 17. 4, with the notes.

Of men. Greek *men*-proselytes.

Stirring up (v. 13). The quite different character of the Jews of Thessalonica appears again.

Sent forth Paul (v. 14). He was the leader and the chief object of hatred. It was dangerous in these Roman colonies to invite the charge of treason too many times, and "the brethren" felt that they were not warranted in exposing the life of Paul to further jeopardy.

As far as the sea. To the seaport about twenty miles east, where he took passage for Athens, two hundred miles southeast. Compare 9. 29, 30.

Come to him with all speed (v. 15). According to 1 Th. 3. 1–6, Timothy and Silas did join Paul at Athens. But because he was anxious about the churches in Macedonia he sent them back again, Timothy to Thessalonica, and Silas to Philippi. When they returned, Paul had gone on to Corinth, where they finally joined him (18. 5).

e. Greece. 17. 16–18; 22.

aa. *Athens.* 17. 16–34.

(1) *The Areopagus.* 17. 16–21.

16 Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he beheld the city full of idols. 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with them that met him. 18 And certain also of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him. And some said, What would this babbler say? others, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached Jesus and the resurrection. 19 And they took hold of him, and brought him unto the Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new teaching is, which is spoken by thee? 20 For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean. 21 (Now all the Athenians and the strangers sojourning there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.)

Athens (v. 16). The intellectual and artistic center of the ancient world. In Paul's day its glory had already waned. The city was a beautiful body without a soul. The masses were ignorant and superstitious, and the leading citizens were indifferent idlers. The only thing that interested them was "the news," gossip taking the place of our daily papers (v. 21). Even the old religion had dwindled to mere intellectual curiosity.

His spirit was provoked within him. Paul was grieved and aroused by the sight of all this idolatry. He could no longer remain quiet, as he had intended to do. He went to the single synagogue, "as his custom was" (v. 2), and once more "reasoned from the scriptures" with the Jews

and the proselytes on the sabbath (vv. 2 and 17). And every day he engaged in conversation with individuals and groups "in the marketplace," according to the Grecian fashion and in the manner of Socrates 450 years before.

Epicurean and Stoic philosophers (v. 18). The Epicurean school taught that happiness was to be secured by *pleasure*. The Stoics taught that it was to be gained by natural *virtue*. The Epicureans were materialists; the Stoics pantheists. The former were the "Sadducees," and the latter were the "Pharisees," of Hellenism. With the latter Paul was familiar from his native city of Tarsus, where there were several famous Stoics on the teaching staff of the university. He makes several references in his address to the doctrines of both schools.

Encountered him. Met him in disputation. Argued with him.

This babbler. A term of scorn for the outsider who presumed to enter their marketplace and talk "philosophy," as they would call his theology.

Jesus and the resurrection. The Greek word for "resurrection" is "anastasis." This the heathen philosophers mistook for the name of some new goddess. Hence the wording: " 'He seems to be a preacher of foreign divinities,' because he preached Jesus and 'Anastasis' (resurrection)." The old craze for novelty was aroused and they set him up on the Areopagus to entertain them and satisfy their curiosity about this novel pair of deities.

The Areopagus (v. 19). The meeting-place of the Athenian City Council. "Mars Hill" is a translation of the name Areopagus. Paul was led to this hill, away

from the commotion and noise of the marketplace, that he might more conveniently and with less disturbance address them. "Areopagus" was also the name of the Council itself and may therefore mean the Council in session. Compare margin.

(2) *Paul's Address.* 17. 22–31.

22 And Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus, and said,
Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious. 23 For as I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, To an Unknown God. What therefore ye worship in ignorance, this I set forth unto you. 24 The God that made the world and all things therein, he, being Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; 25 neither is he served by men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; 26 and he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; 27 that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us: 28 for in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain even of your own poets have said,

For we are also his offspring.

29 Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and device of man. 30 The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: 31 inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

Outline of Paul's address:

I. *Introduction.*
   1. The salutation. 22.
   2. The approach.
   3. The theme announced. 23.

II. *The Discourse.*
   1. The true God. 24.
      a. Creator of the world.
      b. Omnipresent.
      c. Source of all things. 25.
   2. His providence in history. 26.
   3. Its purpose. 27.
   4. Because He is within reach. 28.
   5. Is not like the idols. 29.
   6. Calls to repentance. 30.
   7. Christ will judge the world. 31.
   8. Because He is risen from the dead. 32.

Once again, as so frequently in Acts, the speaker is interrupted. He is not given opportunity to follow up this extended first part with the real gospel message and conclude his sermon with the usual application and appeal.

Notice the marked difference between this address and the sermon he preached in Antioch of Pisidia (13. 16–41). Here he only had time to speak of idolatry's atheistic denial of God.

Very religious (v. 22). Literally "god-fearing." The term itself is ambiguous and may mean either "devout," or "superstitious." If the Athenians took it as a compliment, they would soon recognize it as a very doubtful compliment.

To an unknown God (v. 23). One of many forgotten heathen deities. The inscription had a purely pagan meaning, but Paul makes use of the higher sense of which it was capable.

Dwelleth not in temples (v. 24). Compare Stephen's address (chapter 7, especially vv. 48–50). This doctrine would of course not be at all agreeable to the idolatrous Athenians.

Made of one (v. 26). One man, or one substance. The proud and clannish Athenians needed these reminders of their dependence upon God and the unity of the human race. The distinction between Greeks and Barbarians was as sharp and strong in Athens as the distinction between Englishmen and natives in India or between white men and "niggers" in America.

Your own poets (v. 28). The following line is a quotation from the "Phænomena" of the Stoic writer Aratus. Almost the same words occur in the "Hymn to Zeus" by Cleanthes, also a Stoic. The quotation and the manner of its introduction show Paul's familiarity with the Classics. He quotes Greek poets again in 1 Cor. 15. 33 and Tit. 1. 12.

The time of ignorance (v. 30). Heathen darkness and ignorance of His will. This God "overlooked," passed over, in the sense of not holding them accountable, except before the bar of their own conscience. But now the plea of ignorance is taken away by a definite revelation and command. Compare 14. 16.

By the man whom he hath ordained (v. 31). Literally "*in* the man." See Jn. 5. 22.

Raised him from the dead. This was the central theme of the preaching of all the apostles. See 2. 32; 3. 15, 26; 4. 10; 5. 30; 10. 40; 13. 30, 33, 37; 17. 3; 23. 6; 24. 15, 21; 25. 19; 26. 8, 23. The resurrection of Jesus proves that He has divine authority to judge the resurrected dead.

At this point Paul was interrupted and silenced by ridicule. Neither the Epicureans nor the Stoics would have any interest in hearing about a resurrection and a final judgment. Had Paul been permitted to continue, we see from the last verse of the address (v. 31) and from his other speeches what he would have added. He himself felt that he had failed.

(3) *The Effect of Paul's Address.* 17. 32–34.

32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked; but others said, We will hear thee concerning this yet again. 33 Thus Paul went out from among them. 34 But certain men clave unto him, and believed: among whom also was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Some mocked at the idea of a resurrection; others were interested; and others again believed. Among these last was a member of the Athenian Council and "a woman named Damaris" (v. 34). "Damaris" means "heifer." The name is known to have been borne by harlots, and it is probable that this woman, mixing with the crowd of men, which a respectable woman was not supposed to do in Athens, was such a brand snatched out of the fire.

This would seem like fair success, and yet it appears that the apostle is dissatisfied. Not so much, however, with the meagre results, as with his sermon and with himself.

Paul never returned to Athens, though on his third journey he was twice within easy reach (19. 21; 20. 2; 2 Cor. 13. 1). Nor does he ever mention Athens in any of his epistles.

bb. Corinth. 18. 1–17.

(1) *Aquila and Priscilla.* 18. 1–4.

1 After these things he departed from Athens, and came to Corinth. 2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, a man of Pontus by race, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome: and he came unto them; 3 and because he was of the same trade, he abode with them, and they wrought; for by their trade they were tentmakers. 4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded Jews and Greeks.

Corinth (v. 1). The capital city and chief commercial center of Greece, about fifty miles west of Athens, across the bay.

Pontus (v. 2). The northwestern province of Asia Minor.

Aquila and *Priscilla.* In 50 A.D. Emperor Claudius had banished all Jews from Rome. This of course included Jewish Christians, and Aquila and Priscilla were among their number. This couple settled temporarily in Corinth. A common faith and a common craft brought them and Paul together and they invited the apostle to share

their quarters. From Corinth they went with Paul to Ephesus (vv. 18, 19) and assisted him in his work there (v. 26; 1 Cor. 16. 19). Later, about 58 A.D., we find them back in Rome again (Rom. 16. 3, 4), and later still once more in Ephesus (2 Tim. 4. 19). "Priscilla" is a diminutive form of the proper name "Prisca" and means "little Prisca," that is, "little old woman," a term of endearment. Compare the name of Moses' wife Zipporah, which is a similar diminutive of Zippor, "bird," and therefore is equal to our English "Birdie." In Rom. 16. 3, 4 Paul calls Prisca and Aquila "my fellow-workers in Christ," and adds the high praise, "who for my life laid down their necks" (risked their lives); unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles." Both in Corinth and in Rome their home was the meeting-place of the church.

The same trade (v. 3). Every Jewish boy was taught a trade on which he might fall back in case of failure in business or the vocation of his choice. We see how serviceable tentmaking became in the case of Paul. By this he supported himself and paid the way of his assistants in part.

They wrought. They worked together at the trade of tentmaking.

(2) *Paul's Visit in Corinth.* 18. 5–11.

5 But when Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was constrained by the word, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. 6 And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook out his raiment and said unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; I am

clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. 7 And he departed thence, and went into the house of a certain man named Titus Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. 8 And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. 9 And the Lord said unto Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: 10 for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to harm thee: for I have much people in this city. 11 And he dwelt there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.

Silas and Timothy (v. 5). See 17. 14, 15, and note.

Constrained by the word. Felt urged to preach. His two assistants brought a contribution in money from Philippi, and this set him free from constant labor at tent-making and enabled him to devote more of his time to preaching.

Blasphemed (v. 6). See note on 13. 45.

Shook out his raiment. Another Jewish way of disowning relationship. He "excommunicates" them, and turns to the Gentiles. Compare 13. 51; Mt. 27. 24.

Your blood. The expression means: "You are responsible for your destruction. The guilt of your spiritual death rests upon yourselves. You, not I, will have to answer for your sin of unbelief and disobedience to the truth. Compare Mt. 27. 25.

Went into the house. To use it as a meeting-place for the services. For his own lodging we may suppose he still remained with Aquila and Priscilla.

One that worshipped God. A proselyte (16. 14). His home was therefore an appropriate meeting-place for both Gentiles and such Jews as might choose to attend.

Crispus. In the absence of Silas and Timothy, Paul baptized this important convert with his own hands. Also Gaius and the household of Stephanas, his first convert in Greece (1 Cor. 1. 15; 16. 15, 17).

A vision (v. 9). Paul was deeply discouraged by his failure to win his countrymen to the Christian faith. Compare Rom. 9. 1–3. Perhaps too he knew that plans were afoot to put him out of the way and he feared for his life (v. 12). His anxiety about the Macedonian converts, his failure at Athens, and the continued separation from Silas and Timothy, depressed his spirits. In his First Epistle to the Corinthians (2. 3) he writes, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling," and in 2 Cor. 1. 8 he says that he was "weighed down exceedingly" and "even despaired of life." But the Lord did not let his faithful servant despair utterly.

I am with thee (v. 10). "I" is emphatic. In his extremity Paul had no doubt prayed as David did in Ps. 38. 21; 71. 9. He received the same answer as Joshua (Josh. 1. 5). Compare Is. 54. 10; Jer. 1. 7, 8; Jn. 14. 18.

I have much people. Souls included in His election of grace and to be won by the preaching of Paul. A wonderful glimpse of the saving providence of God in Christ, and a most encouraging passage for all pastors, missionaries, and "fellow-workers in the Lord." How true this statement proved we see from the two Epistles to the Corinthians. Compare Jn. 10. 16.

A year and six months (v. 11). 51–52 A.D. During this time Paul wrote his first epistles, namely, the two

Epistles to the Thessalonians. This was about fifteen years after his conversion. We should not forget that Silas and Timothy took part in the work of preaching and ministering to the souls in Corinth (2 Cor. 1. 19).

(3) *Gallio.* 18. 12–17.

12 But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him before the judgment-seat, 13 saying, This man persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law. 14 But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If indeed it were a matter of wrong or of wicked villany, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you: 15 but if they are questions about words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; I am not minded to be a judge of these matters. 16 And he drove them from the judgment-seat. 17 And they all laid hold on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat. And Gallio cared for none of these things.

Gallio was proconsul (v. 12). A brother of the philosopher Seneca, one of the teachers of Nero. Compare 13. 7.

Rose up against Paul. Their bitterness would be all the stronger when Paul's hearers in the house next door to the synagogue began to increase, and when their own ruler of the synagogue became a convert to the Christian faith.

Not minded to be a judge (v. 15). This Roman official considered it to be outside of his jurisdiction, perhaps beneath his dignity, to pay any attention to the religious squabbles of the despised Jews. In his anger at being

fooled to hold a session for such "nonsense," he drove them out (v. 16).

Laid hold on Sosthenes (v. 17). When Gallio had decided that a Jewish wrangle was not worth bothering about, the crowd made use of the opportunity to vent a grudge against a Jew. Perhaps this successor of Crispus as ruler of the synagogue had been a zealous spokesman of the Jews, and Paul would not improbably have some sympathizers among the Gentiles in the crowd. But even with this unprovoked and unjust assault upon Sosthenes the proconsul did not care to interfere. The name Sosthenes occurs again in 1 Cor. 1. 1 and may be the same person. If so, this ruler of the synagogue became another convert to Christ.

For many other interesting particulars about the ministry of Paul in Corinth see the First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians, written from Ephesus 56 A.D.

CC. *Ephesus.* 18. 18–22.

18 And Paul, having tarried after this yet many days, took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila: having shorn his head in Cenchreæ; for he had a vow. 19 And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. 20 And when they asked him to abide a longer time, he consented not; 21 but taking his leave of them, and saying, I will return again unto you if God will, he set sail from Ephesus.

22 And when he had landed at Cæsarea, he went up and saluted the church, and went down to Antioch.

Sailed thence for Syria (v. 18). East, across the Ægæan, to Ephesus in Asia Minor, about 250 miles. His final destination was Syria, that is, Antioch in Syria, about 500 miles farther east.

Cenchreæ. The eastern seaport of Corinth (Rom. 16. 1).

For he had a vow. A modified form of the Nazirite vow (Num. 6. 1–21). It was taken in gratitude to God for deliverance from serious illness or great danger. The hair of the head was shaved, and then allowed to grow, and after a certain period the devotee went to Jerusalem, shaved the head again and made an offering of the hair which had grown in the interval. The completion of a similar vow is described in 21. 23–26. The apostle to the Gentiles was also a Jew, and when it did not militate against Christian faith and Christian liberty, he often conformed to such Jewish observances.

Ephesus (v. 19). The capital city of the Roman province of Asia. Its population at this time was 225,000. It was famous for its temple of Diana and for its immense theater. This time the Holy Spirit permitted Paul "to speak the word in Asia." See 16. 6. Its time of grace had arrived.

Entered into the synagogue. Though he often encountered hostility and persecution he would always make use of an offered opportunity to preach the gospel to his countrymen first. Those at the cosmopolitan Ephesus appear to have been less hostile than the Jews in Macedonia and Greece (v. 20).

This verse marks the end of the Second Missionary Journey.

I will return again (v. 21). This promise he soon redeemed (19. 1). On his third journey he stayed in Ephesus three years. Se note on 19. 10.

If God will. It did not depend on his own will, but on the will of God. Compare Jas. 4. 13–15.

He went up (v. 22). From the low-lying city on the coast to the central mountain region.

Saluted the church. In Jerusalem. There is no mention of a gathering to receive his report, as there was at Antioch upon his return from the first missionary journey (14. 27). Perhaps the liberal apostle to the Gentiles met with a cool reception by the conservative Jewish Christians. Even the name of the city is not mentioned. At all events, as soon as Paul had delivered his greeting and completed his vow, he hastened to the more congenial society of the Christians in Antioch.

He consented not (v. 20). He evidently wished to make the offering of his Nazirite vow in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover festival.

4. Third Missionary Journey. 18. 23—21. 30.

53–57 A.D.

a. The Departure. 18. 23.

23 And having spent some time there, he departed, and went through the region of Galatia, and Phrygia, in order, establishing all the disciples.

He departed. From Antioch, the third and last time. The account of this journey extends to 21. 20. This time, as far as we know, Paul starts out alone. In 19. 22, however, we find Timothy and Erastus mentioned again as "two of them that ministered unto him," and in 18. 22 Gaius and Aristarchus are called "Paul's companions in travel." Others joined him from time to time and journeyed with him for longer or shorter periods (20. 4).

The region of Galatia and Phrygia. His third visit in these parts (13. 13—14. 25; 15. 41—16. 6).

Shortly after this visit he wrote the Epistle to the Galatians.

b. Apollos. 18. 24–28.

24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by race, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the scriptures. 25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spake and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, knowing only the baptism of John: 26 and he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. But when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God

more accurately. 27 And when he was minded to pass over into Achaia, the brethren encouraged him, and wrote to the disciples to receive him: and when he was come, he helped them much that had believed through grace; 28 for he powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

This paragraph forms a sort of parenthesis, or digression, to introduce the narrative of the next chapter.

Apollos (v. 24). A contraction of Apollonius.

An Alexandrian. Of Alexandria, North Egypt, where there was a large colony of Jews.

Mighty in the scriptures. Well versed in the Old Testament Scriptures and of exceptional ability in explaining and applying them,—the kind of learning every Christian should be in the effort to attain and the qualification which should be the ideal of every preacher of the Word. This means true "eloquence" and spiritual power. Observe also that Apollos was "fervent in spirit" and "taught accurately the things concerning Jesus."

Knowing only the baptism of John (v. 25). The baptism of repentance (19. 2–5). He did not know as yet that other Baptism which is the entrance into the kingdom of Christ. Therefore his "instruction in the way of the Lord" must have been limited to the Old Testament and to what John the Baptist had said "concerning Jesus." Consequently he had much more to learn about "the Way," and Priscilla and Aquila undertook the task of instructing this promising candidate in the Christian religion. It was a course in theology, and these two Christians constituted the faculty of this early and primitive

seminary. The instruction would include the doctrinal fundamentals, the Sacraments, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Priscilla is mentioned first as the leading and more zealous of the two. When Apollos had been instructed and established in the faith, there is no doubt that he received Christian baptism.

Achaia (v. 27). Greece. Apollos labored in Corinth.

Helped them much. A testimony to the thoroughness of the instruction he had received from Priscilla and Acquila. He "watered" what Paul had "planted" (1 Cor. 3. 6).

Confuted (v. 28). Silenced by convincing argument.

Showing by the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. The same language as used of the preaching of Paul, from the earlier stages following his conversion and throughout his career (9. 20, 22; 17. 3; 18. 5). Apollos was so influential and popular in Corinth that a group of Christians called themselves by his name (1 Cor. 1. 12), and later he refused to return to Corinth even at the request of Paul (1 Cor. 16. 12).

c. Ephesus. 19. 1–41.

aa. *The Baptism of John.* 19. 1–7.

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples: 2 and he said unto them, Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed? And they said unto him, Nay, we did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given. 3 And he said, Into what then were ye baptized? And they said, Into John's baptism. 4 And Paul said, John

baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. 5 And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. 7 And they were in all about twelve men.

Apollos was at Corinth (v. 1). See 18. 27.

The upper country. Galatia (18. 23).

Came to Ephesus. This he had promised to do if he could and God so willed (18. 21). This city was the scene of the later labors of Timothy and the apostle John. The Gospel of John and his three Epistles are supposed to have been written here. According to an early tradition John died here about 100 A.D.

Whether the Holy Spirit was given (v. 2). Compare Jn. 7. 39. Paul's first visit in Ephesus had been very brief (18. 19–21). There had been very little time for instruction in the faith, and no occasion for it, as there is no record of any conversions. These disciples were looking for the early advent of the Messiah in the flesh, and had prepared for His coming by receiving the baptism of John, perhaps in consequence of Apollos' preaching (18. 25). They may have heard of the Comforter, but they did not know of His operation by personal experience. They had confessed their sins and been baptized "with the baptism of repentance," but they did not know of faith in Jesus as the Messiah they were expecting, the forgiveness of sins, regeneration by that faith, its seal of baptism in His name, or the gift of the Holy Spirit. That is, they

had taken the *first step,* but not as yet the second step on "the Way." Compare 20. 21. The case of these twelve men (v. 7) was parallel to that of Apollos (18. 26).

When they heard this (v. 5). Verses 4 and 5 are a brief summary of the instruction given by Paul and the faith by which it was received.

The Holy Spirit came on them (v. 6). Compare the parallel case of the Samaritans in 8. 15–17. Also Mt. 3. 11; 28. 19; Acts 1. 5; 2. 38; 9. 17; 10. 44–48.

bb. *The Sons of Sceva.* 19. 8–20.

8 And he entered into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God. 9 But when some were hardened and disobedient, speaking evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. 10 And this continued for the space of two years; so that all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. 11 And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12 insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out. 13 But certain also of the strolling Jews, exorcists, took upon them to name over them that had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, a chief priest, who did this. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said unto them, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and mastered both of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 And this became known to all, both Jews and Greeks, that dwelt at Ephesus; and fear fell upon them

all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 Many also of them that had believed came, confessing, and declaring their deeds. 19 And not a few of them that practised magical arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So mightily grew the word of the Lord and prevailed.

Into the synagogue (v. 8). The same synagogue as 18. 19. See note. Some of those who had "asked him to abide a longer time" (18. 20) now hardened their hearts in obstinate unbelief and disobedience to the truth. Compare the experience of the Lord Jesus (Jn. 12. 36–43).

The Way (v. 9). See 9. 2 and note.

Separated the disciples. Divided his hearers into two classes, addressing the Jews and the Greeks separately, but giving his chief attention after this to the latter. Compare 13. 46; 18. 6; 28. 28, and the example of Jesus in Mt. 13. 10, 11. This group of Gentiles met on a roofed platform, where Tyrannus, a philosopher unknown to us, used to instruct his school of students. These meetings Paul could hold "daily," and not only on the sabbath, as before in the synagogue.

Two years (v. 10). Plus the "three months" of v. 8, and the "while" of v. 22. See 20. 31, "three years." During this period Paul and his associates founded the famous Seven Churches of Asia (Rev. 1. 11). Read Paul's Epistle to the Colossians, addressed to the church in Colosse, near Laodicea and Ephesus. Note especially the letter addressed by the glorified Saviour to "the church in Ephesus" (Rev. 2. 1–7).

By the hands of Paul (v. 11). God works; Paul is the instrument.

Handkerchiefs or aprons (v. 12). Belonging to friends of the sick and with which they touched the body of Paul. Compare 5. 15.

Exorcists (v. 13). Men who attempted to drive out evil spirits by employing charms and spells and by uttering certain magical formulas. Compare Mt. 12. 27. Seeing the power which Paul exercised in the name of Jesus, two of the "seven sons of one Sceva" decided to make use of this phrase in the case of a man possessed by demons. But they took this name in vain with most disastrous consequences to themselves (v. 16).

The name of the Lord Jesus was magnified (v. 17). Even the manifest powers of darkness were compelled to glorify Christ. Compare Phil. 1. 15–18.

Magical arts (v. 19). The so-called "black arts": witchcraft, sorcery, spiritism, fortune-telling, and all practices that make pretence to supernatural agency and the aid of evil spirits.

Fifty thousand pieces of silver. Ten thousand dollars. This great bonfire must have made a deep impression on the city, like "the bonfire of vanities" which resulted from Savonarola's preaching in Florence.

cc. *Demetrius.* 19. 21–41.

21 Now after these things were ended, Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome. 22 And having sent into Macedonia two of them

that ministered unto him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

23 And about that time there arose no small stir concerning the Way. 24 For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Diana, brought no little business unto the craftsmen; 25 whom he gathered together; with the workmen of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this business we have our wealth. 26 And ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they are no gods, that are made with hands: 27 and not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account, and that she should even be deposed from her magnificence whom all Asia and the world worshippeth. 28 And when they heard this they were filled with wrath, and cried out saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. 29 And the city was filled with the confusion: and they rushed with one accord into the theatre, having seized Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul's companions in travel. 30 And when Paul was minded to enter in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not. 31 And certain also of the Asiarchs, being his friends, sent unto him and besought him not to adventure himself into the theatre. 32 Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was in confusion; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together. 33 And they brought Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And Alexander beckoned with the hand, and would have made a defence unto the people. 34 But when they perceived that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians. 35 And when the townclerk had quieted the multitude, he saith, Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there who knoweth not that the city of the Ephesians is temple-keeper of the great Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? 36 Seeing then that these things cannot be gainsaid, ye ought to be quiet,

and to do nothing rash. 37 For ye have brought hither these men, who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. 38 If therefore Demetrius, and the craftsmen that are with him, have a matter against any man, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls: let them accuse one another. 39 But if ye seek anything about other matters, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. 40 For indeed we are in danger to be accused concerning this day's riot, there being no cause for it: and as touching it we shall not be able to give account of this concourse. 41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

Passed through Macedonia (v. 21). This refers to the future plans of Paul and not to any present event. It simply makes the important announcement that at this time Paul "purposes in the spirit" to go to Rome, after he had completed the present journey, including Macedonia and Achaia (Greece), and again arrived in Jerusalem. This prospective visit in Macedonia and Corinth is alluded to in 1 Cor. 16. 1–3. In vv. 8, 9 of the same chapter Paul gives the reason for his long stay in Ephesus. That the intended visit in Rome was in harmony with the will of the Lord is directly confirmed later in Jerusalem (23. 11). Paul planned the evangelization of the Roman empire many years before he actually undertook it (Rom. 1. 13; 15. 22–26). Perhaps he also has the phrase "and kings" of 9. 15 in mind.

Having sent into Macedonia two of them (v. 22). To make arrangements that the contribution of the churches might be collected before Paul arrived (1 Cor. 16. 2). Shortly after this he wrote First Corinthians.

No small stir concerning the Way (v. 23). A commotion on account of the new faith.

Made silver shrines (v. 24). Little copies of the famous local temple of Diana. Many such shrines, containing a figure of the goddess, have been discovered near Ephesus. Demetrius was evidently the president of the silversmith trust. In this capacity he called a meeting of the corporation, inviting other silversmiths, smelters, miners, et cetera, to attend. Paul was interfering with business and must be silenced.

Made with hands (v. 26). Compare 17. 24.

Turned away much people. From their devotion to Diana and from the purchase of shrines.

This our trade (v. 27). Observe the designing skill of the speaker. The danger to their trade and wealth (v. 25) was the matter of chief importance to Demetrius and his guild, but he mentions it only incidentally and emphasizes "the temple of the great goddess Diana" as the main thing. He knows very well that his fellow-craftsmen will catch the point. We are familiar with the motive and the language in the cry of "patriotism" in modern times. The "interests" understood and immediately acted on the suggestion (v. 28). They set about to create a mob spirit, which they use most skillfully for their own ends (vv. 29, 32, 34). Compare 17. 5.

Seized Gaius and Aristarchus (v. 29). Because Paul was not immediately at hand. Paul, however, was ready to risk his life, but was dissuaded by the disciples and by friendly Asiarchs (v. 31). These Asiarchs were provincial officers of Asia, present in Ephesus to take charge of the festival games in honor of Diana. It is remarkable how often we find Roman officials of various kinds

friendly to Paul. Compare 13. 8; 18. 14; 19. 37; 23. 22–25; 27. 43.

The theater (v. 31). The famous theater of Ephesus, with a seating capacity of 24,500.

They brought Alexander (v. 33). The contempt of the Jews for idols was well known, and there was imminent danger that they might be involved in this rising against these Christian Jews and possibly be massacred. They were therefore anxious to convince the crowd that they had no sympathy with Paul and his companions. It is possible that this Alexander is identical with the Alexander mentioned in 2 Tim. 4. 14.

The town clerk (v. 34). The City Recorder, who also presided at the regular popular assemblies (v. 39). As a responsible officer of the government it was to his own interest to quell an uproar that might take on serious dimensions and prove dangerous to property and life. The citizens also shared in this responsibility (v. 40). Like the speech of Demetrius, the speech of the clerk was admirably suited to the occasion. His chief argument is that the position of Ephesus as sacristan of Diana is so unquestionable, and the worship of Diana so firmly established, that neither could be endangered by the presence of a few strangers. The great Jupiter would take care of his own.

The image which fell down from Jupiter (v. 35). The origin of the image and its worship may have been a meteoric stone striking the ground where the temple was later erected. This meteor may have had an unusual shape, or may have been fashioned by the heathen priests into the semblance of a human form.

There are proconsuls (v. 38). Judges, whose duty it was to hold court and settle disputes. Compare 13. 7; 18. 12.

Other matters (v. 39). Cases not pertaining to the city courts. These cases would then be heard in the assembly cited on the legally fixed days.

In danger to be accused (v. 40). Of sedition. As they would not be able to give cause for the tumult, the city might be punished by the emperor with the loss of its valuable privileges. This powerful argument appealed to the self-interest of the craftsmen and the crowd, and immediately quelled the uproar.

In this chapter Paul encounters opposition from four typical quarters: the Jews, evil spirits, money interests, and the heathen mob. Perhaps these are the "beasts" with whom he speaks of having "fought at Ephesus" (1 Cor. 15. 32).

Read Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians.

d. Macedonia and Greece. 20. 1–6.

1 And after the uproar ceased, Paul having sent for the disciples and exhorted them, took leave of them, and departed to go into Macedonia. 2 And when he had gone through those parts, and he had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece. 3 And when he had spent three months there, and a plot was laid against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he determined to return through Macedonia. 4 And there accompanied him as far as Asia, Sopater of Berœa, the son of Pyrrhus; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. 5 But these had gone before, and

were waiting for us at Troas. 6 And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we tarried seven days.

Into Macedonia (v. 1). This was Paul's third visit to Philippi. During this part of the journey he wrote his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, and in Corinth the Epistle to the Romans. From Ephesus Paul and his companions traveled north along the coast of Asia Minor to Troas, then west across the Ægæan to Philippi, then south through Macedonia into Greece to Corinth. Compare the Second Missionary Journey through these same parts (16. 11—18. 7). The present visit to Macedonia was in fulfilment of the intention mentioned in 19. 21. We may supply what is omitted in the account given here from 1 Cor. 16. 17; 2 Cor. 1. 16, 17; 2. 12, 13; 8. 18, 19.

From Corinth Paul purposed to cross the Ægæan back to Ephesus, as he had done on the second journey (18. 18), but the discovery of a plot to murder him on shipboard caused him to "determine to return through Macedonia" (v. 3), that is, north, by land, then across to Troas, and down the coast of Asia Minor to Ephesus.

There accompanied him (v. 4). Permanent and temporary companions. This group traveled in advance of Paul to Troas, where he joined them. From Troas he traveled alone again across the isthmus, while his companions sailed around the point and joined him once more at Assos (vv. 13, 14). Trophimus accompanied Paul as far as Jerusalem (21. 29), and Aristarchus all the way to Rome (27. 2), where he shared his imprisonment (Col. 4. 10). Tychicus was with Paul during both

imprisonments in Rome. In Col. 4. 7 Paul calls him a "beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow-worker in the Lord." Some of these men were delegates bearing contributions from the Gentile churches mentioned in v. 4 to the afflicted mother church in Jerusalem.

We sailed away from Philippi (v. 6). The resumption of the pronoun "we" (and "us," v. 5) indicates that Luke joined Paul at Philippi, where for five years he had been in charge of the newly organized church. The use of this pronoun continues to the end (28. 16).

The days of unleavened bread. The time of the Passover. As this feast could not be celebrated outside of Jerusalem, this phrase is only used to mark the time of the year, namely, the spring of 57 A.D. It had been Paul's aim to arrive in Jerusalem for this Passover, but the change of plan caused by the plot to kill him (v. 3) delayed his return. Now he was trying to reach Jerusalem by Pentecost instead (v. 16). The Jewish Passover may, however, have been observed by the Christians at Philippi in the form of the Christian Easter.

e. Eutychus. 20. 7–12.

7 And upon the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul discoursed with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and prolonged his speech until midnight. 8 And there were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered together. 9 And there sat in the window a certain young man named Eutychus, borne down with deep sleep; and as Paul discoursed yet longer, being borne down by his sleep he fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead. 10 And Paul went down, and fell on him, and

embracing him said, Make ye no ado; for his life is in him.
11 And when he was gone up, and had broken the bread, and
eaten, and had talked with them a long while, even till break
of day, so he departed. 12 And they brought the lad alive, and
were not a little comforted.

The first day of the week (v. 7). Sunday. It was the practice of the early Christians to "break bread," that is, to celebrate the Lord's Supper on "the Lord's Day." They reckoned the days, however, from sunset to sunset and therefore began their Sunday at sundown on Saturday.

Borne down (v. 9). Overcome. Paul's long sermon and the "many lights" are mentioned to explain the drowsiness of Eutychus. The lights would add to the heat and also consume the fresh air and thus tend to make him heavy with sleep.

Taken up dead (v. 9). Found to be dead, when they attempted to lift him up. He had been killed by the fall.

Paul went down (v. 10). By the staircase outside the house.

Fell on him. Compare the means employed by Elijah and Elisha (1 K 17. 21; 2 K. 4. 34, 35).

His life is in him. The young man was dead, but his soul had not left his body and so formed a natural link for the miracle.

Had broken the bread (v. 11). Distributed the Lord's Supper. The discourse of v. 7 was preparatory to the Sacrament. After the Supper Paul *conversed* with the gathering "even till break of day." It was the last time he was with them, and the ship was to leave in the morning.

And eaten. This may refer to the meal enjoyed by the Christians in common, in connection with the celebration of the Lord's Supper. See note to 2. 42.

f. The Coast of Asia Minor. 20. 13–16.

13 But we, going before to the ship, set sail for Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, intending himself to go by land. 14 And when he met us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. 15 And sailing from thence, we came the following day over against Chios; and the next day we touched at Samos; and the day after we came to Miletus. 16 For Paul had determined to sail past Ephesus, that he might not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hastening, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost.

To go by land (v. 13). See note to v. 4.

Assos. A town on the coast of Asia Minor.

Mitylene (v. 14). The capital of the island of Lesbos, south of Troas and Assos.

Chios (v. 15). An island twenty-five miles south of Lesbos.

Samos. An island thirty-five miles southwest of Chios.

Miletus. A seaport of Asia Minor, twenty-five miles southwest of Samos and thirty miles south of Ephesus. The voyage from Assos took three days.

He was hastening (v. 16). If Paul had gone to Ephesus, the Christians there would have tried to detain him and the ship might weigh anchor at any time. He may also have considered the possibility of attack and arrest by his adversaries with consequent delay. It was only a year after the riot of chapter 19, and a man like Paul could

not be hid. Besides, he had in his keeping a large sum of money for the poor in Jerusalem and must not risk its loss (24. 17).

g. The Elders of Ephesus. 20. 17–38.

17 And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church. 18 And when they were come to him, he said unto them,

Ye yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time, 19 serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews; 20 how I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house, 21 testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 22 And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: 23 save that the Holy Spirit testifieth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. 24 But I hold not my life of any account as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. 25 And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, shall see my face no more. 26 Wherefore I testify unto you this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. 27 For I shrank not from declaring unto you the whole counsel of God. 28 Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. 29 I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Wherefore watch ye, remembering that by the space of three years I ceased not to admonish every one night and day with

tears. 32 And now I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified. 33 I coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. 34 Ye yourselves know that these hands ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. 35 In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring ye ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36 And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all. 37 And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, 38 sorrowing most of all for the word which he had spoken, that they should behold his face no more. And they brought him on his way unto the ship.

The elders (v. 17). See note on 11. 30. The "elders" of the Christian church were of course a set of men very different from the "elders" of the Sanhedrin (4. 5).

After what manner I was with you (v. 18). "How I conducted myself among you."

From house to house (v. 20). The great apostle was not above visiting the homes and doing individual evangelization in addition to his public preaching.

Bound in the spirit (v. 22). Feeling compelled to go. Compare Lk. 9. 51.

So that I may accomplish (v. 24). "To serve my Lord and complete the task He has assigned to me means more to me than to preserve my life on its own account, or for my own sake." "Here is complete self-surrender, willingness to fulfill God's plan for his life, conviction as to the source of his ministry, clear aim and purpose of the ministry" (SAMUEL MILLER).

Shall see my face no more (v. 25). A presentiment that may not have been fulfilled, as Paul expressed the hope, in writing to Timothy from Rome some seven years later, of joining him at Ephesus (1 Tim. 3. 14), and seems to have visited Miletus again between his first and second imprisonment in Rome (2 Tim. 4. 20). The emphasis, however, may have been on the word "all," implying that *some* of the elders would be dead, or gone, before he would return again.

Pure from the blood (v. 26). Innocent of guilt. Not responsible for the spiritual death of any of the Ephesians.

Bishops (v. 28). "Overseers." The same as "elders" (v. 17). Their election by the church was recognized as directed and guided by the Holy Spirit.

The Lord. The oldest and best manuscripts of the New Testament read "God." The importance of this reading appears in the next clause of the verse and has a direct bearing on the deity of Christ.

From among your own selves (v. 30). The heretics Hymenæus, Alexander, Diotrephes, and Cerinthus, were "elders" of Ephesus (1 Tim. 2. 20; 3 Jn. 9). Compare 1 Jn. 2. 18, 19.

These hands ministered unto my necessities (v. 34). By working at his trade as tentmaker. See 18. 3; 1 Cor. 4. 12; 1 Th. 2. 9; 2 Th. 3. 8, 9.

Help the weak (v. 35). With the earnings of their labor to support the sick and the poor.

It is more blessed to give. A word of Jesus not recorded in the Gospels, but preserved by tradition.

Observe the following divisions in this address to the Elders of Ephesus:

1. Paul's work in Ephesus. 18–21.
2. His departure to Jerusalem. 22–25.
3. His freedom from responsibility. 26, 27.
4. His charge to the elders. 28–31.
5. His commendation of them to God. 32.
6. His exhortation to follow his example. 33–35.

This remarkable discourse is deserving of the closest study by all "elders," in the ministry, and outside of the ministry. Verses 24, 28, and 32, should be memorized and cherished in the heart of every "fellow-laborer in the Lord."

Luke reports three great speeches delivered by Paul—one during each of the journeys,—the first being addressed to Jews (13. 16–41), the second to Gentiles (17. 22–31), and the third to Christians (20. 18–35).

Kneeled down and prayed (v. 36). Compare this prayer-meeting on the shore with 21. 5. The historian who gives the speech with unusual fullness does not venture to record the prayer. The following affectionate and sympathetic salutations afford a rare glimpse into the hearts and lives of the early Christians. They *loved* one another (Jn. 13. 34).

h. Tyre. 21. 1–6.

21 And when it came to pass that we were parted from them and had set sail, we came with a straight course unto Cos, and the next day unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara: 2 and having found a ship crossing over unto Phœnicia, we went aboard, and set sail. 3 And when we had come in sight of

Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand, we sailed unto Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unlade her burden. 4 And having found the disciples, we tarried there seven days: and these said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not set foot in Jerusalem. 5 And when it came to pass that we had accomplished the days, we departed and went on our journey; and they all, with wives and children, brought us on our way till we were out of the city: and kneeling down on the beach, we prayed, and bade each other farewell; 6 and we went on board the ship, but they returned home again.

Cos and *Rhodes* (v. 1). Islands forty miles south and ninety miles southwest, respectively, of Miletus.

Patara. A city of Lycia, fifty miles east of Rhodes, on the southern coast of Asia Minor. Here the missionaries changed to a ship bound for Phœnicia.

Leaving it on the left hand (v. 3). Sailing between the island of Cyprus and the mainland of Asia Minor. The distance from Patara to Cæsarea is about 400 miles.

Unto Syria. Over against Syria, or along its coast, but without landing at Antioch.

Tyre. The chief port of Phœnicia and the greatest of the maritime cities of the ancient world. Compare note on 12. 20. This was Paul's third visit in these parts (11. 19; 15. 3).

Said to Paul through the Spirit. A difficult passage to explain, as the voice of "the Spirit" seems to contradict what follows in v. 11. The simplest explanation is, that the Spirit foretells what was awaiting Paul, and the brethren warn him and advise him not to proceed.

Accomplished the days (v. 5). The "seven days" which the ship spent in the harbor.

Kneeling down on the beach (v. 6). Compare the farewell scene of 20. 36.

i. Cæsarea. 21. 7–14.

7 And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day. 8 And on the morrow we departed, and came unto Cæsarea: and entering into the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we abode with him. 9 Now this man had four virgin daughters, who prophesied. 10 And as we tarried there some days, there came down from Judæa a certain prophet, named Agabus. 11 And coming to us, and taking Paul's girdle, he bound his own feet and hands, and said, Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. 12 And when we heard these things, both we and they of that place besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. 14 And when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.

Ptolemais (v. 7). The modern Acre, twenty miles south of Tyre.

We departed (v. 8). By land.

Cæsarea. Forty miles south of Ptolemais. See note on 8. 40.

Philip the evangelist, who was one of the Seven. Paul now becomes the guest of the man whom his persecution had driven out of Jerusalem into Samaria (8. 1–6). Compare 6. 5; 8. 4–40.

Daughters, who prophesied (v. 9). Their prophesying may have been in the form of such inspired utterances as those of Hannah, Mary, and Elizabeth (1 Sam. 2. 1–10; Lk. 1. 41–45, 46–55). Compare Lk. 2. 36; Acts 2. 17. There were female prophets in the Old Testament also (Ex. 15. 20; Judg. 4. 4; 2 K. 22. 14; Neh. 6. 14).

Agabus (v. 10). See 11. 27, 28.

Coming to us (v. 11). From Jerusalem, to share with Paul the revelation he had received. In doing this Agabus adopts the symbolic action of the Old Testament prophets (1 K. 22. 11; Is. 20. 3; Jer. 13. 5; 19. 10, 11; Ezek. 4. 1–3; 5. 1–4). Compare the words of Jesus to Peter in Jn. 21. 18.

Deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. Compare the prophecy of Jesus with regard to himself in Mk. 10. 33. The familiar language would remind Paul of "the Lord Jesus (v. 13). This would also help him to realize that the pleadings of his Christian friends were a familiar temptation which he was called to resist in the manner and the Spirit of Jesus (Lk. 22. 40–44).

We (v. 12). The companions of Paul.

They of that place. The Christians living in Cæsarea.

j. Jerusalem. 21. 15–20.

15 And after these days we took up our baggage and went
up to Jerusalem. 16 And there went with us also certain of
the disciples from Cæsarea, bringing with them one Mnason
of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we should lodge.
17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren re-
ceived us gladly. 18 And the day following Paul went in with
us unto James; and all the elders were present. 19 And when

he had saluted them, he rehearsed one by one the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles through his ministry. 20 And they, when they heard it, glorified God;

The disciples from Cæsarea (v. 16). Members of the church dating from the first visit of Philip (8. 40) and the conversion of Cornelius, and now served by Philip (21. 8).

Mnason of Cyprus. Originally from Cyprus, but now residing in Jerusalem, where Paul became his guest.

Were come to Jerusalem (v. 17). For the last time Paul enters the holy city, which he was to leave as a prisoner. The company must have arrived on the Friday preceding Pentecost, 57 A.D.

The brethren received us gladly. A significant statement, compared with the silence of 18. 22. The former coolness had given place to confidence, respect, and love.

Unto James (v. 18). The head of the church in Jerusalem. To him and "all the elders" Paul submits a detailed report of his labors "among the Gentiles."

God had wrought. Again he gives God all the glory.

Glorified God (v. 20). Not Paul, but *God.* The recollection of what had taken place at the apostolic Council, seven years earlier (15. 12–19), would make the report of Paul an occasion for special rejoicing and praise. These words mark the end of the Third Missionary Journey.

II. IN JERUSALEM, CÆSAREA, AND ROME. 21. 20—28. 30.

These closing chapters give an account of the events which lead to the transferring of the church center from Jerusalem, and from Antioch, to *Rome*.

1. In Jerusalem. 21. 20—23. 22.

a. The Advice of James. 21. 20–26.

20 and they said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them that have believed; and they are all zealous for the law: 21 and they have been informed concerning thee, that thou teachest all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. 22 What is it therefore? they will certainly hear that thou art come. 23 Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men that have a vow on them; 24 these take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges for them, that they may shave their heads: and all shall know that there is no truth in the things whereof they have been informed concerning thee; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, keeping the law. 25 But as touching the Gentiles that have believed, we wrote, giving judgment that they should keep themselves from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what is strangled, and from fornication. 26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them went into the temple, declaring the fulfilment of the days of purification, until the offering was offered for every one of them.

Many thousands (v. 20). Indicating the rapid spread of the Christian faith. The 5,000 of 4. 4 had multiplied.

And this only "among the Jews." Among the Gentiles the number would be still greater.

Zealous for the law. The Law of Moses. They had accepted Jesus as the Messiah, but continued to be Jews in their religious customs and rigorously observed all the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish code of laws. Tradition, race spirit, and life-long practice had made this their second nature. It was therefore no easy matter for these Hebrew Christians to step out of the old forms. They had to *grow* out of the past, and this required *time.*

Have been informed (v. 21). The charge was false in point of fact (v. 24), but it had this amount of truth in it, that Paul considered these rites unnecessary, and that the doctrine of salvation by faith in *Christ,* and not by legal observances, would in time lead to their abandonment even by the Jews.

What is it therefore? (v. 22.) "What do you think should be done? Many of these misinformed Christian Jews are here for the Feast. They will learn that you have arrived. They are suspicious of you and prejudiced against you. If they find that you neglect to conform to these customs, the consequences may prove serious, both to their weak faith and your personal safety. Therefore follow our advice this time."

Have a vow on them (v. 23). The same Nazirite vow which Paul himself had taken in Cenchreæ (18. 18).

Purify thyself with them (v. 24). "Associate yourself with them during the seven days of the vow (v. 27), observe the laws of purification, avoid what the Jews consider unclean, pay the expenses of these poorer men for

the required sacrifices, and in this manner prove that the report about you is not true."

As touching the Gentiles (v. 25). "As far as the *Gentile* Christians are concerned, their case was disposed of, as you know, at the Council we held here in Jerusalem seven years ago, and therefore do not need to be considered" (15. 19–29).

Took the men (v. 26). Paul followed the advice of James and the elders. He could do this consistently, as these four men were Christians (v. 23) and did not consider their vow as an act of merit for salvation. And his own faith was so strong that he could afford to be considerate in dealing with the two classes of Christians which could not as yet be brought to the same point of view. Read again in this connection 1 Cor. 9. 19–23.

Declaring the fulfilment. Giving notice to the priests that the vow would be completed at a certain time. The closing "days of purification" appear to have been spent within the temple precincts.

b. Paul's Arrest. 21. 27—23. 11.

aa. *The Occasion.* 21. 27–36.

27 And when the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the multitude and laid hands on him, 28 crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and moreover he brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath defiled this holy place. 29 For they had before seen with him in the city Trophimus the Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple. 30 And all the city was moved, and

the people ran together; and they laid hold on Paul, and dragged him out of the temple: and straightway the doors were shut. 31 And as they were seeking to kill him, tidings came up to the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in confusion. 32 And forthwith he took soldiers and centurions, and ran down upon them: and they, when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, left off beating Paul. 33 Then the chief captain came near, and laid hold on him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains; and inquired who he was, and what he had done. 34 And some shouted one thing, some another, among the crowd: and when he could not know the certainty for the uproar, he commanded him to be brought into the castle. 35 And when he came upon the stairs, so it was that he was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the crowd; 36 for the multitude of the people followed after, crying out, Away with him.

The Jews from Asia (v. 27). Unbelieving Jews from Ephesus, in the province of Asia, in Asia Minor (19. 9).

Against the people (v. 28). Paul was accused of treason against the people of Israel, the law of Moses, and the Temple. The same charge was brought against Stephen (6. 11–14).

Brought Greeks into the temple. This was only a supposition based on the circumstance that they had previously seen Paul with Trophimus in the city. The Jews "from Asia" would know Trophimus "of Asia" (20. 4), that is, Ephesus. Perhaps they had also been passengers on the same ship that brought Paul and Trophimus from Patara to Ptolemais (21. 1, 7). When we consider the purpose of Paul's presence in the Temple he would hardly be so indiscreet as to provoke the Jews by bringing Trophimus into the sacred enclosure. Gentiles were permit-

ted in the outer court of the Gentiles, but only Jews were allowed to enter the inner courts, the Temple proper. The presence of a Greek inside the second wall would desecrate the holy place, and the penalty of such an offence was death. An inscription in Greek and Latin, lately discovered in Jerusalem, reads as follows: "No alien to pass within the fence and enclosure round the Temple. Whosoever shall be taken shall be responsible to himself alone for the death which will ensue?"

Dragged him out of the temple (v. 30). Out of the inner Temple into the court of the Gentiles.

The doors were shut. The Beautiful Gate of 3. 2, 10. The Levite guards closed the gates between the outer and inner courts, possibly to exclude the raging crowd and prevent further disturbance of the service; or possibly to prevent Paul from seeking safety at the altar, which as a man under a vow he had a right to do (1 K. 1. 50); or it may have been 4 P.M., after the evening sacrifice, when the gates were always closed.

Tidings came up to the chief captain (v. 31). The Roman government had built a castle adjoining the Temple. This was called the Tower of Antonia. It served as the armory and barracks of "the band," a cohort of 1,000 soldiers stationed in Jerusalem. From the walls of the castle the soldiers on guard could look into the courts of the Temple and report any disturbance. The present uproar began to assume such proportions (vv. 30, 31) that the commander of the garrison was informed. The name of this "captain" was Claudius Lysias (23. 26).

Ran down upon them (v. 32). Through an underground passage leading between the castle and the Temple. To escape identification, the Jews intended to beat Paul to death in the crowd, and the prompt action of the officer no doubt saved the apostle's life.

Bound with two chains (v. 33). Because he regarded Paul as a desperate criminal (v. 38). For the sixth time an attempt was made on his life (9. 23, 29; 14. 5, 19; 20. 3); for the third time he was arrested (16. 19; 18. 12); and for the second time he becomes a prisoner (16. 23). In this manner he was now "delivered into the hands of the Gentiles," as Agabus had prophesied (21. 11). What "the Holy Spirit had testified to him in every city" (20. 23) had now come to pass. From this time on, to the end of Acts, the apostle is "Paul in bonds."

Borne of the soldiers (v. 35). When the mob realized that their prey was being snatched from them, they crowded the soldiers so violently that Paul had to be hoisted up out of their reach over the soldiers' heads.

Away with him (v. 36). Compare Jn. 19. 15; Acts 22. 22.

bb. *On the Stairs.* 21. 37–40.

37 And as Paul was about to be brought into the castle, he saith unto the chief captain, May I say something unto thee? And he said, Dost thou know Greek? 38 Art thou not then the Egyptian, who before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the four thousand men of the Assassins? 39 But Paul said, I am a Jew, of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and I beseech thee, give me leave to speak unto the people. 40 And when he had given him leave, Paul,

standing on the stairs, beckoned with the hand unto the people; and when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, saying,

Dost thou know Greek? (v. 37). Paul had addressed the captain in the Greek language, and the officer was surprised, as he was under the impression that he had arrested a famous Egyptian rebel of that time.

Assassins (v. 38). The so-called Sicarii. These were a band of patriotic fanatics who mixed with the crowds and stabbed influential Jews supposed to be friendly to the hated Roman government. The Egyptian became their leader, led them around through "the wilderness" to the Mount of Olives, and planned an attack on Jerusalem from this point. The governor Felix dispersed them, but the Egyptian escaped.

A citizen of no mean city (v. 39). Tarsus was a famous city and styled itself a "self-governing metropolis." Citizenship in Tarsus was confined to a select few and therefore meant high social standing. See note to 16. 37. Judging from 22. 24, 27–29, Lysias did not put much faith in Paul's claim to Roman citizenship, though the possibility of its truth made him careful. The privilege to speak was therefore granted to Paul largely on account of the sudden respect inspired by the polished Greek of the prisoner.

CC. *Paul's Address.* 22. 1–21.

1 Brethren and fathers, hear ye the defence which I now make unto you.

2 And when they heard that he spake unto them in the Hebrew language, they were the more quiet: and he saith,

3 I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, instructed according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God, even as ye all are this day: 4 and I persecuted this Way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. 5 As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and journeyed to Damascus to bring them also that were there unto Jerusalem in bonds to be punished. 6 And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and drew nigh unto Damascus, about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. 7 And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 8 And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. 9 And they that were with me beheld indeed the light, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. 10 And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. 11 And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me I came into Damascus. 12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, well reported of by all the Jews that dwelt there, 13 came unto me, and standing by me said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And in that very hour I looked up on him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will, and to see the Righteous One, and hear a voice from his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be a witness for him unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. 16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name. 17 And it came to pass, that, when I had returned to Jerusalem, and while I prayed in the temple, I fell into a trance, 18 and saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, because they will not receive of thee testimony concerning me. 19 And I said, Lord,

they themselves know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: 20 and when the blood of Stephen thy witness was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting, and keeping the garments of them that slew him. 21 And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee forth far hence unto the Gentiles.

Brethren and fathers (v. 1). The usual form of addressing a gathering of Jews. See 7. 2. It meant "Fellow-Israelites and Members of the Sanhedrin." Remarkable words on the lips of a man whom they had just tried to kill!

More quiet (v. 2). The "great silence" produced by the gesture of his lifted hand (21. 40) was increased when they caught the sound of their own language and stood still to listen.

I am a Jew (v. 3). Paul had been accused of speaking "against the people, and the law, and this place" (21. 28). These charges he now takes up one by one. Verses 1–5 answer the first; 6–16, the second; and 17–21, the third. In the first part (vv. 1–5) he proves that he had been a zealous Jew and a persecutor of the Christians, and therefore not a mere renegade.

Gamaliel. See 5. 34.

The estate of the elders (v. 5). The Sanhedrin.

Received letters. Papers of commission and warrants of arrest. This was twenty years before, and as the high priest and elders of that day would most probably be gone Paul would be appealing here to the records (9. 1).

In the second part of the address (vv. 6–16) Paul shows that the change he had undergone was the result

of a voice from heaven and therefore of a revelation as direct and divine as the law of Moses (v. 14). See notes on 9. 3–18.

The Righteous One (v. 14). Jesus. See 3. 14; 7. 52.

Thou shalt be a witness (v. 15). Paul's commission as an apostle was in the same terms that Christ had used in commissioning the Eleven (1. 8).

Wash away thy sins (v. 16). Compare Tit. 3. 5.

Returned to Jerusalem (v. 17). This refers to the visit recorded in 9. 26 and Gal. 1. 18.

In the third part of his address (vv. 17–21) Paul answers the charge of having desecrated the Temple by showing that it was in this very sanctuary, "while he prayed in the temple," that he had another vision and received a second command.

They themselves know (v. 19). Paul argues with the Lord, that because the inhabitants of Jerusalem knew of his part in the persecution of the Christians the Jews would all the more readily believe his new message and that he therefore ought to remain and labor in Jerusalem.

Depart (v. 21). The command had been repeated. The inference is, that Paul was commanded to go to the Gentiles in consequence of the unbelief of the Jews. Gal. 1 informs us that he stayed in the city only fifteen days. Compare 9. 28–30.

dd. *Paul Saved from Scourging.* 22. 22–29.

22 And they gave him audience unto this word; and they lifted up their voice, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live. 23 And as they

cried out, and threw off their garments, and cast dust into the air, 24 the chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, bidding that he should be examined by scourging, that he might know for what cause they so shouted against him. 25 And when they had tied him up with the thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? 26 And when the centurion heard it, he went to the chief captain and told him, saying, What art thou about to do? for this man is a Roman. 27 And the chief captain came and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? And he said, Yea. 28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this citizenship. And Paul said, But I am a Roman born. 29 They then that were about to examine him straightway departed from him: and the chief captain also was afraid when he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.

Unto this word (v. 22). The word "unto the Gentiles" (v. 21). This word of Paul, quoting "Jesus of Nazareth" as glorified and divine, stung them to the quick. They were unable to endure a statement which implied that their unbelief shut them out, and that Gentiles were preferred to Jews.

Threw off their garments (v. 23). See note on 18. 6. It was a similar symbolic act carried to the extreme.

Cast dust into the air. A sign of extreme grief. Compare Job 2. 12.

Tied him up with thongs (v. 25). Stretched him out ready for scourging.

A Roman. A Roman citizen.

Uncondemned. Without trial and verdict of guilty. See note to 16. 37. Paul claims the privileges of his citizenship this time because it would afford him some hold

over Lysias and protection against arbitrary treatment at his hands. After his beating by the Jews a Roman scourging might have proved fatal. To undergo *needless* suffering is, moreover, not a Christian principle.

A Roman born (v. 28). Born a Roman citizen. Paul asserts his superiority even to the chief captain.

ee. *Paul's Trial before the Sanhedrin.* 22. 30—23. 11.

30 But on the morrow, desiring to know the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him, and commanded the chief priests and all the council to come together, and brought Paul down and set him before them.

23. 1 And Paul, looking stedfastly on the council, said, Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience until this day. 2 And the high priest Ananias commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth. 3 Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall: and sittest thou to judge me according to the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law? 4 And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? 5 And Paul said, I knew not, brethren, that he was high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of a ruler of thy people. 6 But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees: touching the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. 7 And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees; and the assembly was divided. 8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. 9 And there arose a great clamor; and some of the scribes of the Pharisees' part stood up, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: and what if a spirit hath spoken to him, or an angel? 10 And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul

should be torn to pieces by them, commanded the soldiers to go down and take him by force from among them, and bring him into the castle.

11 And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer: for as thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

Brought Paul down (v. 30). Down the stairs (21. 40) from the upper part of the Tower of Antonia into the Council Chamber of the Sanhedrin in the Temple, on the south side of the Court of Priests.

Looking stedfastly on the Council (v. 1). Twenty years before he was the fanatical servant of this very Sanhedrin. Possibly even a member. Now he stands before them as an accused culprit; but also, we see, as an enlightened, inspired, and fearless accuser. Notice that while Peter had addressed them, "Ye rulers of the people, and elders" (4. 8), and Stephen called them "Brethren and fathers" (7. 2), Paul says simply, "Brethren."

In all good conscience. He had always tried to do what he believed to be right in the sight of God, even when as a persecutor he was blind to the truth (24. 16; 1 Tim. 1. 13). "Lived," however, here means "as a citizen" and implies that the Sanhedrin had no jurisdiction over him.

Ananias (v. 2). High priest, 47–59 A.D. The spirit of the Sanhedrin had not changed. Impenitence and unbelief learns nothing from experience. Ananias had been angered by the emphatic "I" of v. 1 and by its sting in his own evil conscience.

Whited wall (v. 3). Walls were frequently whitewashed to hide the dirt. It was a common figure for

"hypocrite." Compare Mt. 23. 27. The high priest always wore a white robe. Ananias professed to administer justice according to the law, and the law expressly forbade the striking of a prisoner on trial. See Dt. 19. 15–18. Ananias was shortly deposed for greed and cruelty, and ten years later he was stabbed to death by an assassin when trying to hide in a city drain.

Revilest thou God's high priest? (v. 4.) The supreme judge of the Court had committed a blunder. To save the embarassing situation his henchmen make the deserved rebuke an insult against God's representative.

I knew not (v. 5). It may be that Paul did not notice that it was the high priest who had spoken. But the reading of the Greek is, "I did not know that he was a high priest." The definite article occurring in v. 2 is wanting here. Paul's reply may therefore have been most subtle irony. The meaning in that case would be: "I could not imagine that such a ruffian could be a high priest. The language was certainly not that of God's representative." The added quotation is from Ex. 22. 28. The first part of the verse, not quoted by Paul, may have served as a tacit suggestion for Ananias. At all events Paul applies the second part quoted to himself. Ananias would have to answer for himself. As for Paul he humbles himself and stands corrected under the Word of God. Perhaps he suddenly remembered too the very different reply of Jesus when smitten before this same assembly (Jn. 18. 23). Compare 1 K. 22. 24, 25; Jer. 20. 2, 3.

Paul perceived (v. 6). He saw clearly enough, it appears, to distinguish the different garb of the two promi-

nent religious parties composing the Sanhedrin. At once he sees his opportunity and makes immediate use of it to throw an apple of discord into the gathering and deflect attention from himself. He is on familiar ground and knows that if he identifies himself with the Pharisees and professes his faith in the resurrection this part will side with him and divide the assembly. The situation was a serious one for Paul. He knew that they were seeking his death. It was therefore a justifiable means of saving his life. See vv. 10. 12–15, and 25. 9–11. We may therefore justly call Paul's plan "the brilliant stroke of a Christian diplomat" for legitimate ends.

The hope (v. 6). Of Israel. The coming of the Messiah.

Called in question. On trial.

There arose a dissension (v. 7). The plan worked. "The assembly was divided." The Sanhedrin is split into two warring factions. In the confusion Paul escapes out of their hands by being taken back to the castle.

What if a spirit (v. 9). *Spirit* and *angel* should be emphasized, to bring out the relation of this verse to v. 8 and the sarcastic rejoinder of "the scribes of the Pharisees" against the hated Sadducees in the Council. Compare Lk. 20. 27–38.

Be of good cheer (v. 11). On the advice of James, Paul had entered the temple and undertaken the Nazirite vow to conciliate the Jews, and now he had been saved from being torn to pieces only by the timely rescue of the Roman officer. All this seems to have weighed down his heart with hopeless grief. But as once before, in Corinth,

he receives direct encouragement from the Lord himself (18. 9, 10).

Bear witness also at Rome. Paul had written to the Christians in Rome of his "longing to see them" and added that "oftentimes he had purposed to come unto them" (Rom. 1. 11–13). At Ephesus he had signified his intention to "see Rome" (19. 21). To this the Lord Jesus now gives His approval and shows him that it is included in His own plans with His faithful servant. Rome was the capital of the Gentile world. To "bear witness" there would crown the work and complete the mission of the great apostle to the Gentiles.

c. The Conspiracy. 23. 12–22.

12 And when it was day, the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. 13 And they were more than forty that made this conspiracy. 14 And they came to the chief priests and the elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, to taste nothing until we have killed Paul. 15 Now therefore do ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you, as though ye would judge of his case more exactly: and we, before he comes near, are ready to slay him. 16 But Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, and he came and entered into the castle and told Paul. 17 And Paul called unto him one of the centurions, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain; for he hath something to tell him. 18 So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and saith, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and asked me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say to thee. 19 And the chief captain took him by the hand, and going aside asked him privately,

What is it that thou hast to tell me? 20 And he said, The Jews have agreed to ask thee to bring down Paul to-morrow unto the council, as though thou wouldest inquire somewhat more exactly concerning him. 21 Do not thou therefore yield unto them; for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, who have bound themselves under a curse, neither to eat nor to drink till they have slain him: and now are they ready, looking for the promise from thee. 22 So the chief captain let the young man go, charging him, Tell no man that thou hast signified these things to me.

The Jews banded together (v. 12). Not the Sanhedrin, but volunteers, like Judas Iscariot (Mt. 26. 14–16). The Sanhedrin, however, was informed of the plan and became a willing party to the plot (vv. 14, 15).

More than forty. To be numerous and influential enough to save them from serious harm in case of detection.

Paul's sister's son (v. 16). The only mention of Paul's family relations. Possibly this nephew was a rabbinical student in Jerusalem, as his uncle had been. News and secrets appear to have traveled fast even in those days. See 9. 13, 24, 30; 11. 1, 22; 14. 6; 17. 6, 14; 20. 3; 21. 21; 28. 15.

Entered the castle. Paul was in custody now only for safe keeping, which accounts for the easy access of his nephew.

2. In Cæsarea. 23. 23—26. 32.

a. Delivery of Paul to Felix. 23. 23–35.

23 And he called unto him two of the centurions, and said, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go as far as Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night: 24 and he bade them provide beasts, that they might set Paul thereon, and bring him safe unto Felix the governor. 25 And he wrote a letter after this form:

26 Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix, greeting. 27 This man was seized by the Jews, and was about to be slain of them, when I came upon them with the soldiers and rescued him, having learned that he was a Roman. 28 And desiring to know the cause wherefore they accused him, I brought him down unto their council: 29 whom I found to be accused about questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. 30 And when it was shown to me that there would be a plot against the man, I sent him to thee forthwith, charging his accusers also to speak against him before thee.

31 So the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul and brought him by night to Antipatris. 32 But on the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle: 33 and they, when they came to Cæsarea and delivered the letter to the governor, presented Paul also before him. 34 And when he had read it, he asked of what province he was; and when he understood that he was of Cilicia, 35 I will hear thee fully, said he, when thine accusers also are come: and he commanded him to be kept in Herod's palace.

Two hundred soldiers (v. 23). Altogether a military escort of 470 soldiers. The despised Christian Jew is provided with the bodyguard of a king! Lysias seems to

have sensed the wide extent of the determination of the Jews to be rid of Paul. It had assumed city-wide proportions. Lysias was also responsible to the government for his prisoner, a Roman citizen, and if Paul was waylaid, Lysias might be accused of having been bribed and be liable to court-martial.

As far as Cæsarea. The residence of the governor and the chief seat of jurisdiction. The distance is sixty-two miles. Felix was governor 52–58 A.D.

The third hour of the night. 9 P.M.

Having learned that he was a Roman (v. 27). A misrepresentation of the facts. He claims credit for interference on behalf of a Roman citizen and omits to state that it was only later, when he was about to scourge Paul, and Paul had twice claimed citizenship, that the captain would recognize the claim (21. 39; 22. 25). Lysias is also discreetly silent about the binding and intended scourging of the Roman citizen (22. 24, 25).

Charging his accusers (v. 30). An afterthought which Lysias followed up later.

To Antipatris (v. 31). A distance of thirty-five miles.

Left the horsemen to go with him (v. 32). At this stage the 400 soldiers and spearmen returned. From Antipatris the seventy horsemen would be sufficient guard. These would also travel swiftly with the mounted Paul (v. 24) the remaining twenty-seven miles.

Asked of what province (v. 34). To make sure that Paul's case came under the jurisdiction of Felix. When he learned that the province was Cilicia, he agreed at once

to hear the case as soon as the prisoner's accusers arrived (v. 35).

In Herod's palace (v. 35). In the prison ward of the building.

We hear nothing more of the forty plotters. By this time they must have been both hungry and thirsty! But as Rackham says, "in that age of legal subtlety patriotic 'doctors of the law' would have no difficulty in finding some valid excuse for declaring the vow null and void."

b. Paul's Trial before Felix. 24. 1–23.

aa. *Tertullus.* 24. 1–9.

1 And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with certain elders, and with an orator, one Tertullus; and they informed the governor against Paul. 2 And when he was called, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying,

Seeing that by thee we enjoy much peace, and that by thy providence evils are corrected for this nation, 3 we accept it in all ways and in all places, most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness. 4 But, that I be not further tedious unto thee, I entreat thee to hear us of thy clemency a few words. 5 For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes: 6 who moreover assayed to profane the temple: on whom also we laid hold: 8 from whom thou wilt be able, by examining him thyself, to take knowledge of all these things whereof we accuse him. 9 And the Jews also joined in the charge, affirming that these things were so.

Ananias (v. 1). See 23. 2.

An orator. An advocate or lawyer, retained by Ananias and the elders.

Enjoy much peace (v. 2). A compliment to Felix for his vigorous repression of the revolt headed by the Egyptian (21. 38). Paul omits all flattering compliments (v. 10).

This man (v. 5). Paul. Tertullus makes five charges: (1) *A pestilent fellow.* A town-loafer, a suspicious character, a depraved tramp. (2) *A mover of insurrections.* A revolutionist, a traitor against the government, who would attempt to overthrow it by forcible means, or in short, "a red." (3) *A ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.* A dangerous fanatic among the followers of the despised pretender from Nazareth. (4) *Assayed to profane the temple.* See 21. 28. (5) *On whom we also laid hold.* That is, the high authorities of the church had found it necessary to arrest him, and this in itself should be sufficient evidence against him as a criminal. Compare the language of the Sanhedrin to Pilate regarding Jesus (Jn. 18. 30, 31).

Verse 7 is wanting. See note on 8. 37.

bb. *Paul's Defence.* 24. 10–23.

10 And when the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, Paul answered,

Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I cheerfully make my defence: 11 seeing that thou canst take knowledge that it is not more than twelve days since I went up to worship at Jerusalem: 12 and neither in the temple did they find me disputing with any man or stirring up a crowd, nor in the synagogues, nor in the city. 13 Neither can they prove to thee the things whereof they now accuse me. 14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the Way

which they call a sect, so serve I the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law, and which are written in the prophets; 15 having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there shall be a resurrection both of the just and the unjust. 16 Herein I also exercise myself to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men always. 17 Now after some years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings: 18 amidst which they found me purified in the temple, with no crowd, nor yet with tumult: but there were certain Jews from Asia—19 who ought to have been here before thee, and to make accusation, if they had aught against me. 20 Or else let these men themselves say what wrong-doing they found when I stood before the council, 21 except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question before you this day.

22 But Felix, having more exact knowledge concerning the Way, deferred them, saying, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will determine your matter. 23 And he gave order to the centurion that he should be kept in charge, and should have indulgence; and not to forbid any of his friends to minister unto him.

Paul answers the five charges in the accusation of Tertullus: (1) "I am not a town-loafer nor of doubtful character, as it is not more than twelve days since I arrived in Jerusalem. Six of those twelve days I have spent on the way to this city and here in prison (23. 32; 24. 1). And my object in coming to Jerusalem was no evil purpose. I came to worship (v. 11).

(2) I am no rebel against the government. These accusers cannot prove that I have even attempted anywhere to stir up trouble (vv. 12, 13).

(3) I admit the truth of the third charge. I will not

deny my faith in Jesus of Nazareth. I belong to what they choose to call a 'sect,' but which we believers in Jesus call "the Way." I am a Christian. This is the manner in which I serve the same God as the Jews, obeying the same divine law, accepting the same Scriptures, and believing, as these Pharisees do, in the resurrection. I also try to *live* as a Christian, with a good conscience before both God and men. My only crime is that I endeavor to be a consistent Christian (vv. 14–16).

(4) As to the charge of profaning the temple, judge from the facts: I brought money for the needy of my own nation; I entered the temple to make offerings, as the Jews do; I had made purification according to the law; there was no crowd and no tumult; and those who saw me there are not these men present here, but certain Jews from Asia. They ought to have been my accusers, as they know the truth, but they seem to have no accusation to make, because they are not here (vv. 17–19).

(5) And as to the inference of the arrest and trial before the Sanhedrin let Ananias and the elders here tell you what wrong they convicted me of, when I stood before the Council. Nothing came of it (23. 1–10). The recollection is not a pleasant one to them. They will be careful to keep silent about the conduct of that dignified body, when I said that I was on trial before them on account of my faith in the resurrection (vv. 20, 21).

Deferred them (v. 22). Postponed action. The prisoner was a Roman citizen, and Felix saw that these charges were not a safe basis for conviction. The letter from Lysias had said nothing about the "questions of their

law" which figured in the accusations of the Jews. It seemed to be mostly a matter of religious opinions, and nothing in the nature of a crime. Compare the attitude and words of Gallio (18. 14–16). But this religious movement called "the Way" might be made use of by revolutionaries, and this could not be safely ignored. Moreover, Felix had a Jewish wife, and she may have told him something about this new "sect" which interested him. Verse 24 shows a special interest on her part, and v. 22 informs us that Felix had "more exact knowledge" about Christianity than Paul's accusers, or than the average Roman governor. Drusilla was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I, and she no doubt knew of the events related in chapter 12. At all events Felix decides to retain Paul in mild custody, until he had time to send for Lysias and compare notes with him.

Should have indulgence (v. 23). The strict prison rules were to be relaxed in his favor.

c. Paul's Interview with Felix. 24. 24–27.

24 But after certain days, Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess, and sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus. 25 And as he reasoned of righteousness, and self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was terrified, and answered, Go thy way for this time; and when I have convenient season, I will call thee unto me. 26 He hoped withal that money would be given him of Paul: wherefore also he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. 27 But when two years were fulfilled, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus; and desiring to gain favor with the Jews, Felix left Paul in bonds.

He reasoned (v. 25). The intrepid preacher not only told them "concerning the faith in Christ Jesus" (v. 24), but he applied the truth to their individual lives and boldly called "the most excellent governor" and his wife to repentance.

Righteousness. Just dealings with men and right relations with God.

Self-control. Continence and chastity. Drusilla had left her husband to live with Felix.

The judgment to come. His responsibility before God and his final account with Him.

Felix was terrified. He received bribes; his government was notoriously unjust; and he lived in open adultery. The Roman historian Tacitus says of Felix: "He reveled in cruelty and lust, and wielded the power of a king with the mind of a slave." When Paul therefore focused the light of divine truth on the wicked life of Felix, the governor became alarmed and dismissed his "court-preacher" with the promise to recall him at some "convenient season."

That money would be given him (v. 26). That Paul would bribe him to secure his liberty. Felix had caught what Paul said about "bringing alms to his nation" (24. 17).

Communed with him. Tried to establish friendly relations, in view of the bribe he was looking for. This conduct and the act mentioned in v. 27 show the insincerity of the man and how he delayed his repentance. As so often, alas, the "convenient season" never arrived.

For interesting parallels compare John the Baptizer before Herod Antipas and Herodias (Mk. 6. 17–20).

Porcius Festus (v. 27). Festus was appointed governor by Nero in 58 A.D. Felix was deposed and recalled to Rome to answer for his conduct. To placate the Jews, who would accuse him before the emperor, and if possible to make their charges less severe, he "left Paul in bonds," after having kept him in prison for two years, all the while perfectly willing to release him for a price. Paul could doubtless have secured the necessary money, but would not stoop to such practices. Bribes are not included in the will of God. So Paul stays in prison. And in addition the disappointed governor puts him in chains.

During the time of Paul's imprisonment in Cæsarea, Luke no doubt stayed in Palestine. He would be sure to make good use of this opportunity to revise his notes for Acts and to collect material for his Gospel. Both of these he is supposed to have completed in Rome. For the Gospel he would secure valuable and reliable information in these parts from Philip the evangelist in Cæsarea, from James in Jerusalem, from Mary the mother of Jesus, and from other early disciples.

d. Paul before Festus. 25. 1–22.

aa. *The Plot of the Jews.* 25. 1–5.

1 Festus therefore, having come into the province, after three days went up to Jerusalem from Cæsarea. 2 And the chief priests and the principal men of the Jews informed him against Paul; and they besought him, 3 asking a favor against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem; laying a plot to kill

him on the way. 4 Howbeit Festus answered, that Paul was kept in charge at Cæsarea, and that he himself was about to depart thither shortly. 5 Let them therefore, saith he, that are of power among you go down with me, and if there is anything amiss in the man, let them accuse him.

After three days (v. 1). The new governor would need this number of days to establish himself in his headquarters in Cæsarea.

Asking a favor against him (v. 3). A favor of Festus against Paul. They were many and prominent; the prisoner was alone and obscure; it would therefore be easier to bring one man to Jerusalem than for them to come to Cæsarea.

Laying a plot. After two years the old hatred was still burning as fiercely as ever. The same trap was to be set again. See 23. 12–15. If Festus granted their request the plan was to assassinate their victim before he arrived in Jerusalem. The plot, however, miscarried, either because Festus suspected their designs, or because he preferred to tak care of the matter in the regular way. Compare vv. 16, 25. Once again the beneficent intervention of the Roman authorities proved to be a protecting shield and foiled a plot to murder Paul. Jesus continues to redeem the promise He had given His servant (26. 17).

bb. *The Appeal to Cæsar.* 25. 5–12.

6 And when he had tarried among them not more than eight or ten days, he went down unto Cæsarea; and on the morrow he sat on the judgement-seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. 7 And when he was come, the Jews that had come down from Jerusalem stood round about him, bringing against

him many and grievous charges which they could not prove, 8 while Paul said in his defence, Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Cæsar, have I sinned at all. 9 But Festus, desiring to gain favor with the Jews, answered Paul and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? 10 But Paul said, I am standing before Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou also very well knowest. 11 If then I am a wrong-doer, and have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die; but if none of those things is true whereof these accuse me, no man can give me up unto them. I appeal unto Cæsar. 12 Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar: unto Cæsar shalt thou go.

On the morrow (v. 6). In the promptness of Festus, compared with the delays of Felix, we recognize the stamp of a different character. But this official was also a politician and not above using his prisoner to safeguard his own interests (v. 9). The Sanhedrin was a power to be reckoned with, and the charges they had preferred against his predecessors before the emperor made it evident that it was not good policy to make an enemy of this Supreme Court of the Jews.

Paul said in his defence (v. 8). For the third time since his last arrival in Jerusalem Paul is on trial (22. 30; 24. 1). Verse 8 is a brief summary of his reply. From its language we may conclude that the charges were the same as those made before Felix (24. 5, 6).

Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem? (v. 9.) It was evident that Paul had committed no political offence. There remained only the matter of religious questions (v. 19),

and the proper body to hear these would be the ecclesiastical court of the Jews. The question put to Paul therefore meant, "Are you willing to face the Sanhedrin if I go with you and see that justice is done?"

Cæsar's judgment-seat. An imperial court of justice.

Give me up unto them (v. 11). Literally, "make a present of me to them."

I appeal to Cæsar. Paul knew Jerusalem and the Sanhedrin as Festus did not. He did not intend to be handed over to the cruel mercies of his most bitter and unscrupulous enemies. It would mean certain death. The present trial had proved his innocence of any crime against the Roman government. It had also made it evident that his accusers had failed to make good their charges of wrongdoing against the Jews. It was therefore the plain duty of the judge to acquit the prisoner, and Paul protests against a plain miscarriage of justice. If Festus would not do his duty as Cæsar's representative, Paul would assert his privileges as a Roman citizen and appeal to a higher court. He accordingly uses the two words which settled the matter then and there: "Cæsari appello (To Cæsar I appeal)," or the single word, "Appello" (I appeal). By these decisive words Paul escapes out of the power of Festus, and the Jews were balked.

Conferred with the council (v. 12). After a brief consultation with the court officials and legal advisers, Festus confirms the appeal.

cc. *Festus and Agrippa.* 25. 13–22.

13 Now when certain days were passed, Agrippa the king and Bernice arrived at Cæsarea, and saluted Festus. 14 And as they tarried there many days, Festus laid Paul's case before the king, saying, There is a certain man left a prisoner by Felix; 15 about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, asking for sentence against him. 16 To whom I answered, that it is not the custom of the Romans to give up any man, before that the accused have the accusers face to face, and have had opoprtunity to make his defence concerning the matter laid against him. 17 When therefore they were come together here, I made no delay, but on the next day sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded the man to be brought. 18 Concerning whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought no charge of such evil things as I supposed; 19 but had certain questions against him of their own religion, and of one Jesus, who was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. 20 And I, being perplexed how to inquire concerning these things, asked whether he would go to Jerusalem and there be judged of these matters. 21 But when Paul had appealed to be kept for the decision of the emperor, I commanded him to be kept till I should send him to Cæsar. 22 And Agrippa said unto Festus, I also could wish to hear the man myself. To-morrow, saith he, thou shalt hear him.

Agrippá the king (v. 13). Herod Agrippa II, son of Herod Agrippa I (12. 1) and great grandson of Herod the Great (Mt. 2. 1). He ruled under the emperor over the provinces northeast of the Sea of Galilee.

Bernice. Sister of the king, with whom she was living on terms of criminal intimacy. Bernice and Agrippa were sister and brother of Drusilla (24. 24).

One Jesus (v. 19). Observe the language of a pagan. The great central truths of our Christian faith are dis-

missed with a slur. The verse shows that again before Festus Paul had made use of his opportunity to preach Christ crucified and risen from the dead.

Asked whether he would go (v. 20). Festus is silent about his own motives for giving Paul up to the Jews (v. 9).

I also could wish (v. 22). Literally, "I was wishing." He had heard of the Christian religion during the reign of his father in Palestine (12. 1) and was curious to see the famous leader of this "sect." Compare the curious desire of Herod Antipas to see Jesus (Lk. 23. 8).

e. Paul before Agrippa. 25. 23—26. 32.

aa. *Festus Introduces Paul.* 25. 23–27.

23 So on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and they were entered into the place of hearing with the chief captains and the principal men of the city, at the command of Festus Paul was brought in. 24 And Festus saith, King Agrippa, and all men who are here present with us, ye behold this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews made suit to me, both at Jerusalem and here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. 25 But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death: and as he himself appealed to the emperor I determined to send him. 26 Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I may have somewhat to write. 27 For it seemeth to me unreasonable, in sending a prisoner, not withal to signify the charges against him.

When Agrippa was come (v. 23). To the residence of Festus in Cæsarea.

With great pomp. Compare the display of this king's father in 12. 21.

The place of hearing. The court room.

Paul was brought in. Dazzling splendor, and a lone prisoner in chains! A grand array of puppets, and the greatest man since Christ! They sitting, bound in sin and unbelief; he standing, free in the freedom of Christ! The word of the glorified Jesus to Paul continued to receive its fulfilment, "to bear my name before the Gentiles *and kings.*" Compare also the prophetic words of Jesus in the days of His flesh: "They shall lay their hands on you, and shall persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake" (Lk. 21. 12). After the appeal to Cæsar, this examination before Agrippa was only an informal hearing.

Ought not to live (v. 24). The members of the Sanhedrin had therefore repeated before Festus the cries of the multitude in Jerusalem (21. 36; 22. 22).

I determined to send him (v. 25). There was nothing else for Festus to do. He discreetly neglects to state the reason for the prisoner's appeal to Cæsar.

Before you (v. 26). The generals and leading citizens present (v. 23).

My lord. The emperor. This was Festus' opportunity to get needed advice how to formulate the embarrassing letter which he must send with the prisoner to Nero.

bb. *Paul's Address.* 26. 1–29.

1 And Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth his hand, and made his defence:

2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, that I am to make my defense before thee this day touching all the things whereof I am accused by the Jews: 3 especially because thou art expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. 4 My manner of life then from my youth up, which was from the beginning among mine own nation and at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; 5 having knowledge of me from the first, if they be willing to testify, that after the straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee. 6 And now I stand here to be judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers; 7 unto which promise our twelve tribes, earnestly serving God night and day, hope to attain. And concerning this hope I am accused by the Jews, O king! 8 Why is it judged incredible with you, if God doth raise the dead? 9 I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And this I also did in Jerusalem: and I both shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests, and when they were put to death I gave my vote against them. 11 And punishing them oftentimes in all the synagogues, I strove to make them blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto foreign cities. 12 Whereupon as I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 at midday, O king, I saw on the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. 14 And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice saying unto me in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the goad. 15 And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. 16 But arise,

and stand upon thy feet: for to this end have I appeared unto thee, to appoint thee a minister and a witness both of the things wherein thou hast seen me, and of the things wherein I will appear unto thee; 17 delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom I send thee, 18 to open their eyes, that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith in me. 19 Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: 20 but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judæa, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of repentance. 21 For this cause the Jews seized me in the temple, and assayed to kill me. 22 Having therefore obtained the help that is from God, I stand unto this day testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; 23 how that the Christ must suffer, and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people and to the Gentiles.

24 And as he thus made his defence, Festus saith with a loud voice, Paul, thou art mad; thy much learning is turning thee mad. 25 But Paul saith, I am not mad, most excellent Festus; but speak forth words of truth and soberness. 26 For the king knoweth of these things, unto whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him; for this hath not been done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. 28 And Agrippa said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian. 29 And Paul said, I would to God, that whether with little or with much, not thou only, but also all that hear me this day, might become such as I am, except these bonds.

Stretched forth his hand (v. 1). Compare 13. 16; 19. 33; 21. 40.

Outline of Paul's address:

I. *Introduction.* 2, 3.

II. *Discussion.* 4–23.

1. Past life. 4, 5.
2. Present faith. 6. 7.
3. Account of conversion. 8–18.
   a. The dark background. 8–12.
   b. The Light. 13–15.
   c. His commission. 16–18.
4. Obedience to the heavenly vision, 19–23.
   a. In the past. 19, 20.
   b. In the present. 21–23. Preaching
      aa. Christ.
         (1) His sufferings.
         (2) His resurrection.
      bb. To Jews and to Gentiles.

(Interruption and reply, 24, 25).

III. *Appeal to the king.* 26–29.

I think myself happy (v. 2). "I consider it a privilege." A polite form af address. Compare 24. 10. But Paul was also sincere. He knew that Agrippa was a Jew and therefore familiar with Jewish customs and habits of thought (v. 3). He would understand Paul, as no Roman could. And far better than the Sanhedrin could or would. The king's mental detachment would enable him to listen without the same prejudice. The tone of the address shows that Paul speaks with the freedom of a certain confidence.

The promise made of God (v. 6). The coming of the Messiah and the blessings to be received through this "seed of Abraham" (Gen. 22. 18).

God doth raise the dead (v. 8). In "the hope of the promise "Paul includes the blessing of "all the nations of the earth" through the risen Christ and the resurrection of the blessed dead. Compare 23. 6; 24. 15.

Authority from the chief priests (v. 10). See 9. 2.

Gave my vote against them. See 8. 1. Some commentators take this as evidence that Paul had been a member of the Sanhedrin.

To blaspheme (v. 11). To deny their faith in Jesus and to curse His name.

As I journeyed to Damascus (v. 12). See the two previous accounts (9. 3–18; 22. 3–21), and notes.

Whereupon (v. 12). On which errand.

To kick against the goad (v. 14). The goad was a spiked stick used for driving oxen. The animal that kicked against the goad when prodded with it only succeeded in wounding himself still more. The language would seem to imply that by the time of the vision Saul was ill at ease about what he had seen of constancy and triumphant death among the Christians he was persecuting and that he began to have serious misgivings as to the correctness of his course. To persevere would therefore be to "kick against the goad" in the hands of Christ and resist the different course of action to which God was leading him.

A minister (v. 16). A servant.

The people (v. 17). The Jews.

To open their eyes (v. 18). Observe the steps of Christian experience in this verse: (1) Enlightenment; (2) Repentance; (3) Conversion; (4) Faith in Christ; (5) Remission of sins; (6) A heavenly inheritance; (7) Sanctification.

The things wherein thou hast seen me. Paul had seen Jesus also in the spirit of the faithful martyrs.

Works worthy of repentance (v. 20). Compare Lk. 3. 8–14.

Assayed to kill me (v. 21). See 21. 31.

I stand unto this day (v. 22). In spite of the many attempts made to cast him down.

Saying nothing. "My preaching is not contrary to the holy Scriptures. It is entirely consistent with the sacred writings, Why, then, should I be persecuted by the Jews? And why should I not have been acquitted by Felix and Festus?"

The Christ must suffer (v. 23). Literally "if the Christ (the Messiah) be one who has to suffer." Is. 53. 3–10; Lk. 24. 26, 46. The Jews did not look for and believe in a *suffering* Messiah. They considered suffering and humiliation as inconsistent with the power and glory of the coming King. Compare 3. 18; Mt. 16. 21–23; 20. 20–22; Jn. 12. 34.

He first. Christ, as "the firstfruits of them that slept," "the firstborn from the dead" (1 Cor. 15. 20; Col. 1. 18). His resurrection was also an earnest and a pledge of the general resurrection, and especially of the "resurrection to life."

Thy much learning (v. 24). Paul's familiarity with Scripture and his powerful arguments on its basis. Jesus had been crucified within the recollection of those present. To affirm that He was alive would therefore seem to Festus like the ravings of an insane person. Compare the mocking of the Athenians (17. 32). This is the usual opinion of the world with regard to consecrated and zealous believers. The cross is always "foolishness unto Gentiles," as it is "a stumbling-block unto Jews" (1 Cor. 1. 23). Jesus himself was thought to be unbalanced (Mk. 3. 21; Jn. 10. 20). "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; and he cannot know them, because they are spiritually judged" (1 Cor. 2. 14). Perhaps, too, Festus noticed that his royal guests were becoming alarmed, like Felix (24. 25) and in consideration of their feelings interrupted the inspired apostle.

Proclaim light. See Lk. 2. 32.

Words of truth and soberness (v. 25). Paul politely corrects Festus by reminding him that he (Paul) was addressing Agrippa, not Festus, and knew that he could "speak freely" to one who was informed, even if Festus had chosen to remain ignorant of matters that were common knowledge.

Believest thou the prophets? (v. 27). In the pause made by the interruption Paul asks the king a personal question. It was the move of a Socratic logician. If the king assented, the next move would be to prove from the prophets the truth of the Christian faith and clinch the argument by an appeal to the king to accept the conclu-

sion as an honest man would have to do. But Agrippa sees the move and remains silent. He does not care to commit himself. So Paul answers for him. But before Paul can complete his argument and either compel the assent of Agrippa or show him up as insincere, the king in turn interrupts him.

With little persuasion (v. 28). Agrippa had appreciated the compliment of Paul's earlier statement. He follows him closely and with interest. And he saw that Paul was about to send in a home thrust. But the king's love of the world and of his popularity with the Jews would not permit him to be caught. So he dodges the stroke of Paul with a half-facetious and half-sarcastic remark: "You are trying to persuade yourself too easily, Paul, that you can make a Christian of me in a hurry." It was the answer of Felix in different words (24. 25). If Agrippa had declared himself a believer in Jesus and the resurrection it might have cost him his crown, and he was not ready to pay the price.

I would to God (v. 29). The great apostle closes with a wonderful appeal. The love of Christ constrained him (2 Cor. 5. 14) and, filled with that Saviour's love, his heart cries out for the salvation of these darkened souls. The language too is that of rare eloquence and culture, especially in the concluding reference to his chain.

Paul retains his chain, and Agrippa his crown. But—with far deeper truth—Agrippa retains his chain, and Paul his crown.

cc. *The End of the Audience with the King.* 16. 30–32.

30 And the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them: 31 and when they had withdrawn, they spake one to another, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds. 32 And Agrippa said unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.

Nothing worthy of death (v. 31). Paul's message was lost upon the splendid assembly. They dismiss it from their minds as they "rise up" and salve their conscience with sentimental sympathy for the prisoner. It is the usual way in which "high society" doubles on its track and saves appearances.

Might have been set at liberty (v. 32). Agrippa politely confirms the opinion of Festus (25. 25) and makes Paul the pawn of a royal compliment. He also helps to absolve the governor of responsibility by adding that inasmuch as the prisoner had himself blocked the way of release there was nothing to do now but to send him to Cæsar and draft as careful a letter as possible to the emperor. Such was the *human* side of the transaction. The *divine* side was the hidden providence of God which used these external events to bring the apostle nearer to his divinely appointed destination, *Rome.*

3. To Rome. 27. 1—28. 31.

a. The Voyage. 17. 1–8.

1 And when it was determined that we should sail for Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan band. 2 And embarking in a ship of Adramyttium, which was about to sail unto the places on the coast of Asia, we put to sea. Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us. 3 And the next day we touched at Sidon: and Julius treated Paul kindly, and gave him leave to go unto his friends and refresh himself. 4 And putting to sea from thence, we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. 5 And when we had sailed across the sea which is off Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia. 6 And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria sailing for Italy; and he put us therein. 7 And when we had sailed slowly many days, and were come with difficulty over against Cnidus, the wind not further suffering us, we sailed under the lee of Crete, over against Salmone; 8 and with difficulty coasting along it we came unto a certain place called Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea.

"This narrative is the most detailed account of an ancient voyage we possess, and is our principal source of knowledge of the art of navigation as practised by the ancients" (DUMMELOW).

We (v. 1). Luke is still with Paul. He was the only one who remained with him to the end (2 Tim. 4. 11). Another companion on this voyage was Aristarchus (v. 2; 19. 29; 20. 4). He became Paul's fellow-prisoner in Rome (Col. 4. 10).

They. The soldiers, by order of Festus.

The Augustan band. One of the five companies of imperial troops stationed at Cæsarea. It was named for the emperor Cæsar Augustus and the name was equivalent to "royal."

Adramyttium (v. 2). A seaport of Mysia, Asia Minor, east of Troas. The ship was owned there.

His friends (v. 3). Paul was given shore-leave, under guard, to visit the Christians at Sidon, seventy miles north of Cæsarea.

Under the lee (v. 4). The side sheltered from the wind, that is, the east side, as the wind was blowing from the west and prevented the shorter northwest course.

Cilicia, Pamphylia, Lycia (v. 5). Provinces along the southern shore of Asia Minor, opposite Cyprus.

A ship of Alexandria (v. 6). Its home port was Alexandria of Egypt. It carried a cargo of wheat from Egypt to Italy and had a passenger list of 276 souls (vv. 37, 38).

Sailed slowly (v. 7). Tacking against the wind.

Cnidus. A seaport west of Myra.

Not further suffering us. To go straight ahead, west.

Crete. The large island at the southern end of the Ægæan Sea.

Salmone. The eastern cape of Crete.

Fair Havens (v. 8). A bay on the southern side of Crete. It still bears the same name.

Lasea. A town four miles east of Fair Havens.

b. The Storm. 27. 9–26.

9 And when much time was spent, and the voyage was now dangerous, because the Fast was now already gone by, Paul admonished them, 10 and said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that the voyage will be with injury and much loss, not only of the lading and the ship, but also of our lives. 11 But the centurion gave more heed to the master and to the owner of the ship, than to those things which were spoken by Paul. 12 And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to put to sea from thence, if by any means they could reach Phœnix, and winter there; which is a haven of Crete, looking north-east and south-east. 13 And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, they weighed anchor and sailed along Crete, close in shore. 14 But after no long time there beat down from it a tempestuous wind, which is called Euraquilo: 15 and when the ship was caught, and could not face the wind, we gave way to it, and were driven. 16 And running under the lee of a small island called Cauda, we were able, with difficulty, to secure the boat: 17 and when they had hoisted it up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and, fearing lest they should be cast upon the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and so were driven. 18 And as we labored exceedingly with the storm, the next day they began to throw the freight overboard; 19 and the third day they cast out with their own hands the tackling of the ship. 20 And when neither sun nor stars shone upon us for many days, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was now taken away. 21 And when they had been long without food, then Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have set sail from Crete, and have gotten this injury and loss. 22 And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. 23 For there stood by me this night an angel of the God whose I am, whom also I serve, 24 saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must stand before Cæsar: and lo, God

hath granted thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me. 26 But we must be cast upon a certain island.

The Fast (v. 9). Observed on the Day of Atonement. This name for the day gives the date. It was about the first of October, 60 A.D., a very stormy time of the year.

Lading (v. 10). Cargo. This "perceiving" we see was before Paul had received the revelation of a vision (vv. 23, 24).

Phoenix (v. 12). A port thirty miles west of Fair Havens.

Looking northeast and southeast. The harbor was a semicircle, open in a direction which made it secure against all the prevailing winds.

The south wind (v. 13). The west wind shifted to the south.

From it (v. 14). The shore.

Euraquilo. The sailors' name in that day for a "northeaster." To steady the ship they would head it northwest and be driven west by the gale from the northeast.

Could not face the wind (v. 15). To get into Phœnix.

Cauda (v. 16). Southwest of Phœnix, twenty miles.

The boat. The small dory or rowboat towed behind the ship.

Used helps (v. 17). Ropes or chains which they passed around the hull to keep the planking and timbers from being wrenched apart.

The Syrtis. A shallow sandbar, southwest of Cauda.

Lowered the gear. Some of the sails. Or possibly a

mass of cordage, to serve as a drag and keep the ship from rolling in the trough of the sea.

Began to throw (v. 18). Compare v. 38.

The tackling (v. 19). According to some translators, the furniture, such as beds, tables, benches, chests, et cetera. Later they still had tackle for "hoisting up the foresail" (v. 40).

Neither sun nor stars (v. 20). They had no compass in those days and had to depend on the sun and stars for getting the course. They had lost their direction.

Hearkened unto me (v. 21). See vv. 9, 10.

An angel (v. 23). Compare other visions of Paul: 9. 3; 16. 9; 18. 9; 22. 18; 23. 11. In v. 10 Paul had reasoned from the probabilities of the case. Now he speaks with the confidence of a revelation.

Thou must stand before Cæsar (v. 24). Paul was evidently what is called "a good sailor." See vv. 21, 31, 33–35. And he did not fear for his life. His only fear was that he might fail of his great ambition to preach the gospel in Rome (19. 21; 23. 11; Rom. 1. 13–15). He now receives assurance that this object will be realized and therefore that he will be saved from the present danger.

God hath granted thee. In answer to his prayers.

I believe God (v. 25). And he implies, "You do so too, that you may be of good courage." Compare Mt. 14. 27.

Cast upon a certain island (v. 26). The angel-vision had also enabled him to see details of the events in store. See v. 22.

c. The Shipwreck. 27. 27–44.

27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven to and fro in the sea of Adria, about midnight the sailors surmised that they were drawing near to some country: 28 and they sounded, and found twenty fathoms; and after a little space, they sounded again, and found fifteen fathoms. 29 And fearing lest haply we should be cast ashore on rocky ground, they let go four anchors from the stern, and wished for the day. 30 And as the sailors were seeking to flee out of the ship, and had lowered the boat into the sea, under color as though they would lay out anchors from the foreship, 31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. 32 Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off. 33 And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take some food, saying, This day is the fourteenth day that ye wait and continue fasting, having taken nothing. 34 Wherefore I beseech you to take some food: for this is for your safety: for there shall not a hair perish from the head of any of you. 35 And when he had said this, and had taken bread, he gave thanks to God in the presence of all; and he brake it, and began to eat. 36 Then were they all of good cheer, and themselves also took food. 37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore and sixteen souls. 38 And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, throwing out the wheat into the sea. 39 And when it was day, they knew not the land: but they perceived a certain bay with a beach, and they took council whether they could drive the ship upon it. 40 And casting off the anchors, they left them in the sea, at the same time loosing the bands of the rudders; and hoisting up the foresail to the wind, they made for the beach. 41 But lighting upon a place where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the foreship struck and remained unmovable, but the stern began to break up by the violence of the waves. 42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. 43 But the cen-

turion, desiring to save Paul, stayed them from their purpose; and commanded that they who could swim should cast themselves overboard, and get first to the land; 44 and the rest, some on planks, and some on other things from the ship. And so it came to pass, that they all escaped safe to the land.

The fourteenth night (v. 27). From Fair Havens. Compare note of time in vv. 18–20.

The Sea of Adria. The southern end of the Ionian Sea. where it opens out into the Mediterranean.

The sailors surmised. From the motion of the waves.

They sounded (v. 28). Took soundings with lead and line, to see how deep the water was.

Found fifteen fathoms. A fathom is six feet. The change of the shallow depth from twenty to fifteen fathom indicated a slope toward a shore.

On rocky ground (v. 29). A rock-bound coast would mean disaster, with no hope of saving life.

Wished for the day. Longed for morning to come.

Had lowered the boat (v. 30). See vv. 16, 17.

Lay out anchors. Carry anchors to a distance in front of the ship, so as to draw the chains taut and steady the ship at both prow and stern. This was the pretence of the deserting crew.

Except these abide in the ship (v. 31). Every human effort was to be made, even though God had revealed to Paul that they should all be saved. The skill of the sailors was to carry out what God had promised. Compare v. 34.

Let her fall off (v. 32). Drift away, without any occupants.

Continue fasting (v. 33). Their fear and distress had prevented them from breaking their long fast (v. 21), even when Paul assured them that they would all be saved. No doubt they considered his words as those of a visionary.

This is for your safety (v. 34). They would need to strengthen themselves against the exposure and the effort of reaching the shore (vv. 43, 44).

There shall not a hair perish. A proverbial way of saying that no harm would befall them (1 Sam. 14. 45). Paul saw that they still doubted and needed this emphatic assurance.

He gave thanks (v. 35). Paul did not forget to "say grace before meat" even here on the raging ocean and with shipwreck in prospect.

Two hundred threescore and sixteen souls (v. 37). In grouping them according to military regulations to receive their rations the number was found to be 276. Compare Mk. 6. 39, 40.

They lightened the ship (v. 38). Threw the rest of the cargo of grain overboard. See v. 18. The purpose was to make the ship float high and be carried as far ashore as possible.

Loosing the bands of the rudders (v. 40). The rudders in those days consisted of two huge oars or paddles, one on each side of the stern. These had been raised and tied down, to prevent them from interfering with the anchor-chains. When the anchors were cast off, the rudders were unlashed and lowered into the sea, to steer the ship into the bay and to the beach (v. 39).

Hoisting up the foresail. As the wind was from the east and the land was on the west, this was the proper sail to use for keeping the prow headed toward the shore.

But lighting upon a place (v. 41). The word "but" indicates that they failed to make the beach. A short distance from the larger island of Malta is the small island of Salmonetta. In the channel between the two islands the current washes up the sand into the shallow bar, off the bay. Here "two seas meet." That is, the waves from the open ocean and the backwater from the bay. On this bank the foreship struck and stuck, and immediately "the stern began to break up," pounded to pieces by "the violence of the waves." Because the ship grounded on this bar, instead of reaching the beach of the bay, the passengers and crew had to swim for their lives.

The soldiers' counsel (v. 42). The advice and agreement of the soldiers who guarded the prisoners. They were responsible with their lives for their charges. Rather than risk this penalty for the escape of the prisoners they decided to put them to death. Compare 12. 18, 19; 16. 27. A still narrower escape for the apostle Paul!

Desiring to save Paul (v. 43). Once more the hand of the Roman government interfered to protect this servant of God. But guiding this hand was the invisible hand of a mightier power than Rome. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save" (Is. 59. 1). "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men" (Dan. 4. 17). Compare Prov. 8. 16, 16; 21. 1; Acts 4. 27, 28.

They all escaped (v. 44). God redeemed His promise to Paul (vv. 22, 34). According to 2 Cor. 11. 25, written four years previous, this was Paul's fourth shipwreck. The others are not recorded, showing that adventure was not the matter of chief interest to the sacred writers.

d. Melita. 28. 1–6.

1 And when we were escaped, then we knew that the island was called Melita. 2 And the barbarians showed us no common kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us all, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. 3But when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, a viper came out by reason of the heat, and fastened on his hand. 4 And when the barbarians saw the venomous creature hanging from his hand, they said one to another, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped from the sea, yet Justice hath not suffered to live. 5 Howbeit he shook off the creature into the fire, and took no harm. 6 But they expected that he would have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but when they were long in expectation and beheld nothing amiss come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.

Melita (v. 1). Malta, south of Sicily and Italy. Compare 27. 26.

The barbarians (v. 2). All who were not Greeks and Romans were by them called Barbarians, as all who were not Jews were by them called Gentiles (Rom. 1. 14).

No common kindness. Shipwrecked crews were frequently plundered and killed by the natives.

Gathered a bundle of sticks (v. 3). The great apostle does not consider himself above such menial service.

A viper came out. The heat caused the poisonous serpent to dart out of the bundle, as Paul was laying the wood on the bonfire.

Justice (v. 4). The goddess of Justice, worshiped by the idolatrous natives.

A god (v. 6). Some other of their heathen divinities. Compare 14. 11, 12. Compare also with this verse and v. 8 the promise of Christ in Mk. 16. 18, here literally fulfilled.

e. Publius. 28. 7–10.

7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius; who received us, and entertained us three days courteously. 8 And it was so, that the father of Publius lay sick of fever and dysentery: unto whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laying his hands on him healed him. 9 And when this was done, the rest also that had diseases in the island came, and were cured: 10 who also honored us with many honors; and when we sailed, they put on board such things as we needed.

Fever and dysentery (v. 8). Technical medical terms used by "Luke the physician."

Healed him. Compare 15. 12; 2 Cor. 12. 11, 12.

Put on board (v. 10). On the other ship "which had wintered in the island" (v. 11). This was of course largely on Paul's account. Julius' kindness in saving his waiting to convey Paul to Rome.

f. Paul Arrives at Rome. 28. 11–16.

11 And after three months we set sail in a ship of Alexandria which had wintered in the island, whose sign was The Twin Brothers. 12 And touching at Syracuse, we tarried there three

days. 13 And from thence we made a circuit, and arrived at Rhegium: and after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli; 14 where we found brethren, and were entreated to tarry with them seven days: and so we came to Rome. 15 And from thence the brethren, when they heard of us, came to meet us as far as The Market of Appius and the Three Taverns; whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage.

16 And when we entered into Rome, Paul was suffered to abide by himself with the soldier that guarded him.

After three months (v. 11). Probably in February of 61 A.D.

A ship of Alexandria. From the same home port as the wrecked vessel (27. 6). God had the ship ready and life was rewarded (27. 42, 43).

Whose sign was the Twin Brothers. The ship's figurehead consisted of images of Castor and Pollux, the twin sons of Jupiter and the "patron saints" of sailors.

Syracuse (v. 12). The capital city of Sicily, 100 miles north of Malta.

Made a circuit (v. 13). Tacked against the wind.

Rhegium. A city on the southern point of Italy.

A south wind. The breeze shifted and became favorable.

Puteoli. The modern Pozzuoli, near Naples, about 200 miles northwest of Rhegium and 140 miles from Rome. In ancient times it was the chief port of Rome for grain vessels from Egypt. The mouth of the Tiber, on which Rome was located, had silted full of sand.

We found brethren (v. 14). Christian believers, only thirty years after the death of Jesus in far-off Palestine!

Evidence of the zeal with which the new gospel was being spread. Perhaps the "sojourners from Rome," present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (2. 10). had first brought "the good news."

And so we came to Rome. The Rome, the Eternal City, the Mistress of the World, which had so long been the apostle's goal and ambition. Jesus had redeemed His promise (23. 11; 27. 24).

From thence (v. 15). In v. 14, Luke first tells of the completed voyage and then in v. 15 mentions a detail of the journey, as much as to say, "We came to Rome. Before we arrived some friends met us on the way at these two suburbs." Word had been sent ahead to the capital. Some of these "brethren" met Paul and his companions at the Market of Appius (Appii Forum), forty-three miles from Rome, and still others met them at the Three Taverns, ten miles nearer the city. We may be quite certain that the list in Rom. 16. 3–15 contains the names of several of the brethren who came to meet Paul on the way. The Epistle to the Romans was written less than three years previous.

He thanked God and took courage. The arrival was far different from what Paul had pictured. He had not expected that he should arrive as a prisoner in chains. But this meeting with "brethren" cheered his heart and revived his spirit.

We entered into Rome (v. 16). By the Appian Way, so famous in the history of Rome. "Think of how many conquering Cæsars had entered Rome by this same route with such blare and pomp as other times and places have

never seen. But all their glory combined has meant very little to the world. Here comes one lone little Jew, chained as a prisoner to a soldier, and you and I are to-day praising God for the work he established in Europe with Rome as the Center" (SAMUEL MILLER). "We" means Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus, and the companies of Christians who had met them on the way.

To abide by himself. To live alone in a rented house (v. 30), except for the soldier to whom he was chained (v. 20). Julius (27. 1) would be sure to intercede for such a prisoner as the voyage had shown Paul to be. The soldier to which Paul was chained would of course be relieved from time to time by others. These frequent changes of guard would give Paul opportunity to spread the knowledge of his cause. See Phil. 1. 12, 13.

g. Paul Appeals to the Jews. 28. 17–24.

17 And it came to pass, that after three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews: and when they were come together, he said unto them, I, brethren, though I had done nothing against the people, or the customs of our fathers, yet was delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans: 18 who, when they had examined me, desired to set me at liberty, because there was no cause of death in me. 19 But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had aught whereof to accuse my nation. 20 For this cause therefore did I entreat you to see and to speak with me: for because of the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain. 21 And they said unto him, We neither received letters from Judæa concerning thee, nor did any of the brethren come hither and report or speak any harm of thee. 22 But we desire to hear of thee what thou

thinkest: for as concerning this sect, it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against.

The chief of the Jews (v. 17). Once again, even in Rome, the great center of the Gentile world, Paul gathers and addresses the Jews first. The edict of Claudius, banishing the Jews from Rome, had by this time become a dead letter, and again the city swarmed with Jews.

Into the hands of the Romans. Compare 21. 11.

Desired to set me at liberty (v. 18). See 23. 29; 24. 26; 26. 18, 32.

Constrained to appeal unto Cæsar (v. 19). See 25. 7–11.

The hope of Israel (v. 20). See 23. 6; 24. 15; 26. 6, 7.

We neither received letters (v. 21). Paul had been sent to Rome so promptly upon his appeal to Cæsar that the Jews of Judæa had had no time to send charges against him to the Jews of Rome. Very likely such letters were now on the way, and his trial would be delayed till their arrival.

This sect (v. 22). The Christian church of believers. From what Paul had said these Jews gathered that he was a Christian and that for him "the hope of Israel" was fulfilled in Jesus as the Messiah. They professed to be open to conviction, but the language of the verse shows that they were prejudiced from the start and were satisfied that there were good reasons why "this sect was everywhere spoken against."

Had appointed him a day (v. 23). Had made an appointment to meet with him on a certain day.

From morning till evening. He spares no pains to convince them of the truth of the Scriptures and to bring his countrymen to faith in Jesus as the Messiah and the Saviour of the world. Compare Lk. 24. 27, 44, 45.

Some believed (v. 24). Compare 14. 4; 17. 4, 5. The result was, however, far from what the zealous witness had hoped. The cross continued to be a stumbling-block to the Jews, and the number who "disbelieved" must have been discouragingly large. And here in Rome, as at Jerusalem, the consequence was discord and strife. To Paul this division was a sign of the fall of the kingdom of the older covenant, as "a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." The words of Jesus were receiving their fulfilment: "Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken away from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Mt. 21. 43). Henceforth Paul's field of labor lies among the *Gentiles.*

h. Paul Turns to the Gentiles. 28. 25–31.

25 And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed after Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Spirit through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers,
26 saying,
By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand;
Go thou unto this people, and say,
And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive:
27 For this people's heart is waxed gross,
And their ears are dull of hearing,
And their eyes they have closed;
Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes,
And hear with their ears,

And understand with their heart,
And should turn again,
And I should heal them.

28 Be it known therefore unto you, that this salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles: they will also hear.

30 And he abode two whole years in his own hired dwelling, and received all that went in unto him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness, none forbidding him.

23 And when they had appointed him a day, they came to him into his lodging in great number; to whom he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and from the prophets, from morning till evening. 24 And some believed the things which were spoken, and some disbelieved.

One word (v. 25). A final word. In the Holy Spirit and in the words of that Spirit the apostle announces the divine judgment upon the disbelievers. See Is. 6. 9, 10.

Your fathers. Heretofore Paul had said *"our fathers"* (13. 17; 22. 3, 14; 24. 14; 26. 6; 28. 17). Now he dissociates himself from the Jews and identifies himself with the Gentiles, just as Stephen had done before him (7. 51, 52). He takes the position of his first recorded sermon, at Antioch of Pisidia (13. 40, 41, 46, 47), and which he had consistently held throughout his long career. The word he quotes is the same as quoted by Christ himself at a similar crisis in His life (Mt. 13. 13–15).

And I should heal them (v. 27). The words do not mean that it is not God's will that they should turn and be healed. They mean that the unbelievers wilfully close their eyes to the truth, so that they may not turn to God

and be healed by Him. Observe, "lest haply." It is their own preference and deliberate choice.

Be it known therefore (v. 28). Paul closes his last word in Acts with a ringing declaration that this message of salvation is offered to the Gentiles, despised by the Jews, but loved of God, and expresses his conviction, based on years of experience, that the Gentiles will not reject it.

Verse 29 is wanting. See note on 8. 37.

Two whole years (v. 30). From 61 to 63 A.D. This was his *first* imprisonment in Rome. During these years he wrote his Epistles to the Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. These letters should be read in this connection. And especially the Epistle to the Romans, written three years earlier, during his Third Missionary Journey. There is reason to believe that Paul was acquitted and released shortly after these two years, and preached in various parts of the empire, including Spain (Rom. 15. 24, 28). During the persecution which followed the great fire of Rome, Paul was arrested and brought a second time to Rome. This time he was kept in close confinement. His only companion was Luke (2 Tim. 4. 11). The faithful apostle sealed his testimony at the executioner's block under Nero about 67 A.D.

In his own hired dwelling. He continued to be chained to a soldier, but was not confined in the prison. Gifts of money from the Christians in Philippi enabled him to rent his own quarters (Phil. 4. 18).

None forbidding him (v. 31). With characteristic plainness of utterance he preaches the gospel to all who

came to listen, and neither the Jews nor the powers of the government prevent him. "The word of God is not bound" (2 Tim. 2. 9). The subject matter of his public proclamation and his private instruction in the capital of the Roman Empire continues to be "the kingdom of God" and "the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ." It is the fitting close of the Book of Acts. Between his two imprisonments, Paul wrote the Epistle to Titus and the First Epistle to Timothy. The Second Epistle to Timothy was written during Paul's second imprisonment. This is the "swan song" of the great apostle. Out of the dungeon of the Mamertine prison rises the note of his triumphant Christian faith: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved his appearing" (2 Tim. 4. 7, 8).

THE END.

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